The Poetical Works of Robert Burns

THE AFTON BURNS

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ROBERT BURNS

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"A fairy train appear'd in order bright:
Adown the glittering stream they featly danc'd."
—THE BRIGS OF AYR.

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The Poetical Works of
ROBERT BURNS

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CLAUDE A. SHEPPERSON

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AUTOBIOGRAPHIC LETTER OF BURNS TO DR. JOHN MOORE[1]

SIR,—For some time past I have been rambling over the country, partly on account of some little business I have to settle in various places; but of late I have been confined with some lingering complaints, originating, as I take it, in the stomach. To divert my spirits a little in this miserable fog of *ennui*, I have taken a whim to give you a history of myself.

My name has made a small noise in the country; you have done me the honour to interest yourself very warmly in my behalf; and I think a faithful account of what character of a man I am, and how I came by that character, may perhaps amuse you in an idle moment. I will give you an honest narrative, though I know it will be at the expense of frequently being laughed at; for I assure you, Sir, I have, like Solomon, whose character, excepting in the trifling affair of WISDOM, I sometimes think I resemble —I have, I say, like him, "turned my eyes to behold madness and folly," and, like him, too, frequently shaken hands with their

[1] John Moore, a physician and author of some note in the eighteenth century, was born at Stirling in 1729, and died in 1802. After studying medicine and having extensive experience as practitioner at Glasgow he took the degree of M.D.; then travelled for five years on the Continent as medical attendant to the young Duke of Hamilton, and latterly settled in London, where he was resident when Burns became acquainted with him, through Mrs. Dunlop, early in 1787, the poet being then living in Edinburgh and bringing out the second edition of his poems. There are seven or eight letters to Moore in Burns's Correspondence, but the two do not seem ever to have met. Burns's first letter to Dr. Moore was written by way of acknowledgment for kindly criticisms on his poems contained in letters sent by the doctor to Mrs. Dunlop, and by her communicated to the poet. To this Dr. Moore immediately replied, expressing the gratification which the perusal of the poems had given him, and stating that he had been trying to add to the number of subscribers. Among Moore's literary productions were the novel *Zeluco*, which had a considerable popularity in its day; *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany*; *A View of Society and Manners in Italy*; *A Journal During a Residence in France*; *Medical Sketches*; &c. He was the father of the lamented General Sir John Moore, hero of Corunna.

intoxicating friendship. In the very polite letter Miss Williams[1] did me the honour to write me, she tells me you have got a complaint in your eyes. I pray God it may be removed; for, considering that lady and you are my common friends, you will probably employ her to read this letter; and then good-night to that esteem with which she was pleased to honour the Scotch Bard!

After you have perused these pages, should you think them trifling and impertinent, I only beg leave to tell you that the poor author wrote them under some very twitching qualms of conscience that, perhaps, he was doing what he ought not to do—a predicament he has more than once been in before.

I have not the most distant pretensions to what the pye-coated guardians of Escutcheons call a Gentleman. When at Edinburgh last winter I got acquainted at the Herald's Office, and, looking thro' the granary of honors, I there found almost every name in the kingdom; but for me,

> My ancient but ignoble blood
> Has crept through scoundrels since the flood.[2]

Gules, purpure, argent, &c., quite disowned me.

My forefathers rented land of the famous, noble Keiths of Marshal, and had the honor to share their fate.[3] I do not use the word "honor" with any reference to political principles; *loyal* and *disloyal* I take to be merely relative terms in that ancient and formidable court known in this country by the name of "club-law". Those who dare welcome Ruin and shake hands with Infamy, for what they believe sincerely to be the cause of their

[1] Helen Maria Williams, a poetess and miscellaneous writer, who on reading Burns's *Mountain Daisy* had been moved to indite a sonnet which her friend Dr. Moore sent to the poet. This led to some correspondence between Burns and Miss Williams.

[2] Go, if your ancient but ignoble blood
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood.
—Pope, *Essay on Man*.
Burns invented a coat of arms for himself, and had it engraved on a seal.

[3] "Keiths of Marshal" is a rather singular designation. The Keiths were hereditary Earls Marischal of Scotland. They had extensive estates in the north-east of the kingdom, including Dunnottar, to which parish Burns's father belonged. These estates they lost through their connection with the rising of 1715 in favour of the Stuarts. Burns's father left the north in or about 1748, and the downfall of the Keiths, more than thirty years before, could hardly have had anything to do with that incident, though doubtless misfortune of one kind or another befell the poet's grandfather, the tenant of Clochnahill, and led to a break-up of the family. See Sketch of the Poet's Life in Vol. I.

God or their King, are—as Mark Antony in *Shakespear* says of Brutus and Cassius—"honorable men". I mention this circumstance because it threw my father on the world at large, where, after many years' wanderings and sojournings, he picked up a pretty large quantity of observation and experience, to which I am indebted for most of my pretensions to WISDOM. I have met with few who understood men, their manners and their ways, equal to him; but stubborn, ungainly Integrity, and headlong ungovernable Irascibility, are disqualifying circumstances; consequently, I was born a very poor man's son.

For the first six or seven years of my life my Father was gardener to a worthy gentleman of small estate in the neighbourhood of Ayr. Had my Father continued in that situation I must have marched off to be one of the little underlings about a farmhouse; but it was his dearest wish and prayer to have it in his power to keep his children under his own eye till they could discern between good and evil; so, with the assistance of his generous Master, he ventured on a small farm on that gentleman's estate.[1] At these years I was by no means a favourite with anybody. I was a good deal noted for a retentive memory, a stubborn, sturdy *something* in my disposition, and an enthusiastic idiot-piety. I say "*idiot*-piety" because I was then but a child. Though I cost the schoolmaster some thrashings, I made an excellent English scholar; and against the years of ten or eleven I was absolutely a critic in substantives, verbs, and particles. In my infant and boyish days, too, I owed much to an old maid of my mother's, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity, and superstition. She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the country of tales and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, deadlights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, enchanted towers, giants, dragons, and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of Poesy; but had so strong an effect on my imagination that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a sharp look-out in suspicious places; and though nobody can be more sceptical in these matters than I, yet it often takes an effort of philosophy to shake off these idle terrors. The earliest thing of composition I recollect

[1] The farm of Mount Oliphant, which he was enabled to enter through the loan of £100 advanced by his employer.

taking pleasure in was *The Vision of Mirza*, and a hymn of Addison's, beginning "How are thy servants blest, O Lord!" I particularly remember one half-stanza, which was music to my boyish ears:—

> For though on dreadful whirls we hung
> High on the broken wave.

I met with these pieces in Mason's *English Collection*, one of my school-books. The two first books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleasure than any two books I ever read again, were *The Life of Hannibal* and *The History of Sir William Wallace*. Hannibal gave my young ideas such a turn that I used to strut in raptures up and down after the recruiting drum and bagpipe, and wish myself tall enough that I might be a soldier; while the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice in my veins which will boil along there till the flood-gates of life shut in eternal rest.

Polemical Divinity about this time was putting the country half-mad; and I, ambitious of shining on Sundays, between sermons, in conversation parties, at funerals, &c., in a few years more used to puzzle Calvinism with so much heat and indiscretion that I raised a hue and cry of heresy against me, which has not ceased to this hour.

My vicinity to Ayr was of great advantage to me. My social disposition, when not checked by some modification of spited pride, like our Catechism's definition of Infinitude, was "without bounds or limits." I formed many connections with other younkers who possessed superior advantages, the youngling actors, who were busy with the rehearsal of parts in which they were shortly to appear on that stage where, alas! I was destined to drudge behind the scenes. It is not commonly at these green years that the young Noblesse and Gentry have a just sense of the immense distance between them and their ragged play-fellows. It takes a few dashes into the world to give the young Great Man that proper, decent, unnoticing disregard for the poor, insignificant, stupid devils, the mechanics and peasantry around him, who perhaps were born in the same Village. My young superiors never insulted the clouterly appearance of my ploughboy carcass, the two extremes of which were often exposed to all the incle-

mencies of all the seasons. They would give me stray volumes of books; among them, even then, I could pick up some observations; and one, whose heart I am sure not even the "Munny Begum's" scenes[1] have tainted, helped me to a little French. Parting with these my young friends and benefactors as they dropped off for the East or West Indies, was often to me a sore affliction; but I was soon called to more serious evils. My Father's generous Master died; the farm proved a ruinous bargain, and, to clench the curse, we fell into the hands of a Factor, who sat for the picture I have drawn of one in my tale of "Two Dogs." My Father was advanced in life when he married; I was the eldest of seven children, and he, worn out by early hardship, was unfit for labor. My Father's spirit was soon irritated, but not easily broken. There was a freedom in his lease in two years more, and, to weather these, we retrenched our expenses. We lived very poorly: I was a dexterous ploughman for my years; and the next eldest to me was a brother who could drive the plough very well, and help me to thrash. A novel-writer might perhaps have viewed these scenes with some satisfaction, but so did not I; my indignation yet boils at the threatening, insolent epistles from the Scoundrel Tyrant, which used to set us all in tears.

This kind of life—the cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing toil of a galley-slave, brought me to my sixteenth year; a little before which period I first committed the sin of Rhyme. You know our country custom of coupling a man and woman together as partners in the labors of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn my partner was a bewitching creature who just counted an autumn less. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language, but you know the Scotch idiom —she was a "bonnie, sweet, sonsie lass". In short, she, altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me into a certain delicious passion, which, in spite of acid disappointment, gin-horse prudence, and book-worm philosophy, I hold to be the first of human joys, our chiefest pleasure here below! How she caught the contagion I can't say: you medical folks talk much of infection by breathing the same air, the touch, &c.; but I never expressly told her that I loved her. Indeed, I did not well know myself why

[1] This refers to affairs in India belonging to the period of Warren Hastings's rule.

I liked so much to loiter behind with her when returning in the evening from our labors; why the tones of her voice made my heart-strings thrill like an Æolian harp, and particularly why my pulse beat such a furious rantann when I looked and fingered over her hand to pick out the nettle-stings and thistles. Among her other love-inspiring qualifications she sung sweetly; and 'twas her favourite Scotch reel that I attempted to give an embodied vehicle to in rhyme. I was not so presumptive as to imagine that I could make verses like printed ones, composed by men who had Greek and Latin: but my girl sung a song which was said to be composed by a small country laird's son on one of his father's maids, with whom he was in love; and I saw no reason why I might not rhyme as well as he; for, excepting smearing sheep and casting peats (his father living in the moors), he had no more scholar-craft than myself. Thus with me began love and poesy; which at times have been my only, and, till within the last twelve months, have been my highest enjoyment.

My Father struggled on till he reached the freedom in his lease, when he entered on a larger farm, about ten miles farther in the country.[1] The nature of the bargain was such as to throw a little ready money in his hand at the commencement, otherwise the affair would have been impracticable. For four years we lived comfortably here; but a lawsuit between him and his landlord commencing, after three years' tossing and whirling in the vortex of litigation, my Father was just saved from absorption in a jail by a phthisical consumption, which, after two years' promises, kindly stept in and snatched him away, to "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest".

It is during this climacteric that my little story is most eventful. I was, at the beginning of this period, perhaps the most ungainly, awkward being in the parish. No *solitaire* was less acquainted with the ways of the world. My knowledge of ancient story was gathered from Guthrie's and Salmon's geographical grammars; my knowledge of modern manners, and of literature and criticism, I got from the *Spectator*. These with Pope's Works, some plays of Shakspear, *Tull and Dickson on Agriculture*, *The Pantheon*, Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Stackhouse's *History of the Bible*, Justice's *British Gardener*, *Boyle Lectures*,

[1] This was the farm of Lochlea, in Tarbolton parish, to which the family removed in 1777.

Allan Ramsay's Works, Doctor Taylor's *Scripture Doctrine of Original Sin*, *A Select Collection of English Songs*, and Hervey's *Meditations*, had been the extent of my reading. The collection of songs was my *vade mecum*. I pored over them driving my cart or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse; carefully noting the tender or sublime from affectation and fustian. I am convinced I owe much to this for my critic-craft, such as it is.

In my seventeenth year, to give my manners a brush, I went to a country dancing-school. My Father had an unaccountable antipathy against these meetings; and my going was, what to this hour I repent, in absolute defiance of his commands. My Father, as I said before, was the sport of strong passions; from that instance of rebellion he took a kind of dislike to me, which I believe was one cause of that dissipation which marked my future years. I say dissipation, comparative with the strictness and sobriety of Presbyterian country life; for though the Will o' Wisp meteors of thoughtless whim were almost the sole lights of my path, yet early ingrained piety and virtue never failed to point me out the line of innocence. The great misfortune of my life was never to have an aim. I had felt early some stirrings of ambition, but they were the blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops round the walls of his cave. I saw my Father's situation entailed on me perpetual labor. The only two doors by which I could enter the fields of fortune were the most niggardly economy or the little chicaning art of bargain-making. The first is so contracted an aperture, I never could squeeze myself into it; the last—I always hated the contamination of its threshold! Thus abandoned of view or aim in life, with a strong appetite for sociability (as well from native hilarity as from a pride of observation and remark) and a constitutional hypochondriac taint which made me fly solitude; add to all these incentives to social life, my reputation for bookish knowledge, a certain wild logical talent, and a strength of thought, something like the rudiments of good sense, made me generally a welcome guest. So 'tis no great wonder that always, "where two or three were met together, there was I in the midst of them." But far beyond all the other impulses of my heart was *un penchant à l'adorable moitié du genre humain*. My heart was completely tinder, and was eternally lighted up by some Goddess or other; and, like every warfare in this world,

I was sometimes crowned with success and sometimes mortified with defeat. At the plough, scythe, or reap-hook I feared no competitor, and set want at defiance; and as I never cared farther for any labors than while I was in actual exercise, I spent the evenings in the way after my own heart. A country lad seldom carries on an amour without an assisting confidant. I possessed a curiosity, zeal, and intrepid dexterity in these matters which recommended me as a proper second in duels of that kind; and, I dare say, I felt as much pleasure in being in the secret of half the amours in the parish as ever did Premier at knowing the intrigues of half the courts of Europe.

The very goose-feather in my hand seems to know instinctively the well-worn path of my imagination, the favourite theme of my song; and is with difficulty restrained from giving you a couple of paragraphs on the amours of my compeers, the humble inmates of the farmhouse and cottage; but the grave sons of science, ambition, or avarice baptize these things by the name of Follies. To the sons and daughters of labour and poverty, they are matters of the most serious nature; to them the ardent hope, the stolen interview, the tender farewell are the greatest and most delicious part of their enjoyments.

Another circumstance in my life which made very considerable alterations on my mind and manners, was, I spent my seventeenth summer a good distance from home, at a noted school[1] on a smuggling coast, to learn mensuration, surveying, dialling, &c., in which I made a pretty good progress. But I made a greater progress in the knowledge of mankind. The contraband trade was at this time very successful; scenes of swaggering riot and roaring dissipation were as yet new to me, and I was no enemy to social life. Here, though I learnt to look unconcernedly on a large tavern-bill, and mix without fear in a drunken squabble, yet I went on with a high hand in my geometry, till the sun entered Virgo, a month which is alway a carnival in my bosom: a charming *Fillette*, who lived next door to the school, overset my trigonometry, and set me off in a tangent from the spheres

[1] At Kirkoswald, in Carrick, on the road from Portpatrick to Glasgow. Burns seems to have gone to Kirkoswald school in consequence of his mother's connection with the place, she being the daughter of Gilbert Brown, tenant of Craigenton, within the bounds of the parish. During his attendance at the school he lived with his maternal uncle, Samuel Brown, at Ballochneil, a little more than a mile from Kirkoswald.

of my studies. I struggled on with my *sines* and *co-sines* for a few days more; but, stepping out to the garden one charming noon to take the sun's altitude, I met with my angel,[1]

> . . . Like Proserpine gathering flowers,
> Herself a fairer flower . . .

It was in vain to think of doing any more good at school. The remaining week I staid, I did nothing but craze the faculties of my soul about her, or steal out to meet with her; and the two last nights of my stay in the country, had sleep been a mortal sin, I was innocent.

I returned home very considerably improved. My reading was enlarged with the very important addition of Thomson's and Shenstone's Works; I had seen mankind in a new phasis; and I engaged several of my school-fellows to keep up a literary correspondence with me. I had met with a collection of letters by the wits of Queen Anne's reign, and I pored over them most devoutly. I kept copies of any of my own letters that pleased me; and a comparison between them and the composition of most of my correspondents flattered my vanity. I carried this whim so far, that, though I had not three farthings' worth of business in the world, yet every post brought me as many letters as if I had been a broad plodding son of day-book and ledger.

My life flowed on much in the same tenor till my twenty-third year. *Vive l'amour, et vive la bagatelle*, were my sole principles of action. The addition of two more authors to my library gave me great pleasure; Sterne and Mackenzie—*Tristram Shandy* and *The Man of Feeling*—were my bosom favourites.

Poesy was still a darling walk for my mind; but 'twas only the humour of the hour. I had usually half a dozen or more pieces on hand; I took up one or other as it suited the momentary tone of the mind, and dismissed it as it bordered on fatigue. My passions, when once they were lighted up, raged like so many devils, till they got vent in rhyme; and then conning over my verses, like a spell, soothed all into quiet! None of the rhymes

[1] Peggy Thomson, who was more probably engaged in the business of cutting cabbage for the family dinner than imitating the flower-gathering Proserpine, in the "fair field of Enna". Peggy was the heroine of the song beginning,

> Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns
> Bring autumn's pleasant weather.

of those days are in print, except *Winter, a Dirge* (the eldest of my printed pieces), *The Death and Dying Words of Poor Mailie*, *John Barleycorn*, and Songs first, second, and third.[1] Song second was the ebullition of that passion which ended the forementioned school-business.

My twenty-third year was to me an important era. Partly through whim, and partly that I wished to set about doing something in life, I joined a flax-dresser in a neighbouring country town[2] to learn his trade and carry on the business of manufacturing and retailing flax. This turned out a sadly unlucky affair. My partner was a scoundrel of the first water, who made money by the mystery of Thieving, and to finish the whole, while we were giving a welcome carousal to the new year, our shop, by the drunken carelessness of my partner's wife, took fire, and burned to ashes: and I was left like a true poet,—not worth sixpence. I was obliged to give up business; the clouds of misfortune were gathering thick round my father's head; the darkest of which was—he was visibly far gone in a consumption. To crown all, a *belle fille* whom I adored, and who had pledged her soul to meet me in the fields of matrimony, jilted me, with peculiar circumstances of mortification. The finishing evil that brought up the rear of this infernal file was my hypochondriac complaint being irritated to such a degree that for three months I was in a diseased state of body and mind scarcely to be envied by the hopeless wretches who have got their mittimus—"Depart from me, ye cursed, &c.!"

From this adventure I learned something of a Town life; but the principal thing which gave my mind a turn was—I formed a bosom friendship with a young fellow, the first[3] created being I had ever seen, but a hapless son of misfortune. He was the son of a plain mechanic; but a great man in the neighbourhood, taking him under his patronage, gave him a genteel education with a view of bettering his situation in life. The patron dying and leaving my friend unprovided for just as he was ready to launch forth into the world, the poor fellow, in despair, went to

[1] This refers to the songs printed in the first Edinburgh edition of the poems. "It was upon a Lammas night", "Now westlin winds and slaught'ring guns", and "Behind yon hills where Lugar (or Stinchar) flows", are the pieces alluded to.

[2] The town of Irvine, a small seaport on the coast of Ayrshire.

[3] That is *best, most excellent*; a form of expression used repeatedly by Burns.

sea; where, after a variety of good and bad fortune, he was, a little before I was acquainted with him, set ashore by an American privateer, on the wild coast of Connaught, stripped of everything. I cannot quit this poor fellow's story without adding that he is at this moment Captain of a large West-Indiaman belonging to the Thames.

This gentleman's mind was fraught with courage, independence, and magnanimity, and every noble, manly virtue. I loved him; I admired him to a degree of enthusiasm, and I strove to imitate him. I in some measure succeeded; I had the pride before, but he taught it to flow in proper channels. His knowledge of the world was vastly superior to mine, and I was all attention to learn. He was the only man I ever saw who was a greater fool than myself when Woman was the presiding star; but he spoke of a certain fashionable failing with levity, which hitherto I had regarded with horror. Here his friendship did me a mischief; and the consequence was that, soon after I resumed the plough, I wrote the enclosed "Welcome."[1]

My reading was only increased by two stray volumes of *Pamela* and one of *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, which gave me some idea of novels. Rhyme, except some religious pieces which are in print, I had given up; but meeting with *Fergusson's Scottish Poems*, I strung anew my wildly-sounding rustic lyre with emulating vigour. When my Father died, his all went among the rapacious hell-hounds that growl in the kennel of justice; but we made a shift to scrape a little money in the family amongst us, with which (to keep us together) my brother and I took a neighbouring farm.[2] My brother wanted my hair-brained imagination, as well as my social and amorous madness; but,

[1] The poet's "Welcome to his Love-begotten Daughter" (also known by two or three other titles). Richard Brown, the individual here referred to, when the contents of this letter were related to him remarked, it is said: "When I first knew Burns he had nothing to learn in that respect." See Life in Vol. I. The "Welcome" was written a considerable time after Burns resumed the plough. It seems a little odd that he should have cared to expatiate on this incident of his career to one who was so much of a stranger to him. Probably he wished to present Dr. Moore with a piece the latter had not yet seen, and was pleased with the "Welcome", but felt that it required something to be said by way of explanation, if not of palliation.

[2] The farm of Mossgiel, to which the family removed in 1784. The poet's father had died in February of that year. The Burns family were residing here when this letter was written, but Burns himself may have been staying in the village of Mauchline, from which the letter is dated. Gilbert Burns tells us that the farm "was stocked by the property and individual savings of the whole family, and was a joint concern among us."

in good sense, and every sober qualification, he was far my superior.

I entered on this farm with a full resolution, "Come, go to, I will be wise!" I read farming books; I calculated crops; I attended markets; and, in short, in spite of the devil, the world, and the flesh, I believe I should have been a wise man; but the first year, from unfortunately buying bad seed, the second, from the late harvest, we lost half of both our crops. This overset all my wisdom, and I returned, "like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." I now began to be known in the neighbourhood as a maker of rhymes. The first of my poetic offspring that saw the light, was a burlesque lamentation on a quarrel between two Reverend Calvinists, both of them *dramatis personæ* in my *Holy Fair*.[1] I had an idea myself that the piece had some merits; but, to prevent the worst, I gave a copy of it to a friend who was very fond of these things, and told him that I could not guess who was the author of it, but that I thought it pretty clever. With a certain side of both clergy and laity it met with a roar of applause. *Holy Willie's Prayer* next made its appearance, and alarmed the kirk-session so much that they held three several meetings to look over their holy artillery, if any of it was pointed against profane rhymers. Unluckily for me, my idle wanderings led me, on another side, point-blank within reach of their heaviest metal. This is the unfortunate story alluded to in my printed poem *The Lament*.[2] 'Twas a shocking affair, which I cannot yet bear to recollect, and it had very nearly given me one or two of the principal qualifications for a place among those who have lost the chart, and mistaken the reckoning of Rationality. I gave up my part of the farm to my brother; as in truth it was only nominally mine (for stock I had none to embark in it), and made what little preparation was in my power for Jamaica. Before leaving my native country, however, I resolved to publish my poems. I weighed my productions as impartially as was in my power: I thought they had merit; and 'twas a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow, even tho' it should never

[1] See *The Twa Herds*.

[2] Here, of course, he alludes to the troubles brought upon him through his connection with Jean Armour, who was to become his wife some eight months after this was written.

reach my ears—a poor negro driver;—or perhaps gone to the world of spirits, a victim to that inhospitable clime. I can truly say, that *pauvre inconnu* as I then was, I had pretty nearly as high an idea of myself and of my works as I have at this moment. It was ever my opinion that the great unhappy mistakes and blunders, both in a rational and religious point of view, of which we see thousands daily guilty, are owing to their ignorance or mistaken notions of themselves. To know myself, had been all along my constant study. I weighed myself alone; I balanced myself with others; I watched every means of information, to see how much ground I occupied as a man and as a poet; I studied assiduously Nature's design, where she seemed to have intended the various *lights* and *shades* in my character. I was pretty sure my poems would meet with some applause; but at the worst, the roar of the Atlantic would deafen the voice of Censure, and the novelty of West-Indian scenes would make me forget Neglect. I threw off six hundred copies, of which I had got subscriptions for about three hundred and fifty. My vanity was highly gratified by the reception I met with from the public; besides pocketing (all expenses deducted) near twenty pounds. This last came very seasonably, as I was about to indent myself for want of money to pay my freight. So soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price of wafting me to the Torrid Zone, I bespoke a passage in the very first Ship that was to sail, for

Hungry ruin had me in the wind.

I had for some time been skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail; as some ill-advised ungrateful people had uncoupled the merciless legal pack at my heels.[1] I had taken the last farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed a song "The gloomy night is gathering fast", which was to be the last effort of my muse in Caledonia, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine, overthrew all my schemes, by arousing my poetic ambition. The Doctor belonged to a class of critics, for whose applause I had not

[1] This refers to the action taken by Jean Armour's father in seeking the aid of the law against Burns as responsible for the support of any child she might have to him. Armour, it is said, wished to drive Burns from the country; that he should have felt no gratitude towards him is hardly to be wondered at.

even dared to hope. His idea that I would meet with every encouragement for a second edition, fired me so much, that away I posted for Edinburgh, without a single acquaintance in town, or a single letter of recommendation in my pocket.[1] The baneful star which had so long presided in my Zenith, for once made a revolution to the Nadir; the providential care of a good God placed me under the patronage of one of his noblest creatures, the Earl of Glencairn. *Oubliez moi, Grand Dieu, si jamais je l'oublie!*

I need relate no farther. At Edinburgh I was in a new world; I mingled among many classes of men, but all of them new to me, and I was all attention "to catch the manners living as they rise".

You can now, Sir, form a pretty near guess of what sort of a Wight he is whom for some time you have honored with your correspondence. That Whim and Fancy, keen sensibility and riotous passions, may still make him zigzag in his future path of life is very probable; but, come what will, I shall answer for him—the most determinate integrity and honor; and though his evil star should again blaze in his meridian with tenfold more direful influence, he may reluctantly tax friendship with pity, but no more.

My most respectful compliments to Miss Williams. The very elegant and friendly letter she honored me with a few days ago I cannot answer at present, as my presence is required at Edinburgh for a week or so, and I set off to-morrow.

I inclose you "Holy Willie" for the sake of giving you a little further information of the affair than Mr. Creech could do. An Elegy I composed the other day on Sir James H. Blair, if time allow, I will transcribe. The merit is just mediocre.

If you will oblige me so highly and do me so much honor as now and then to drop me a line, please direct to me at Mauchline, Ayrshire. With the most grateful respect, I have the honor to be, sir, your very humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS.

Mauchline, 2d August, 1787.

[1] His departure for Edinburgh was not so sudden as one might suppose from these words. See Sketch of the Poet's Life in Vol. I.

POEMS AND SONGS.

1786 TO 1790.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY,[1]

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH IN APRIL, 1786.

In a letter (written in April, 1786) to his friend John Kennedy, then sub-factor at Dumfries House, near Auchinleck, the seat of the Earl of Dumfries, inclosing a copy of this poem, under the title of "The Gowan," Burns writes of it:—"I am a good deal pleased with some sentiments myself, as they are just the native querulous feelings of a heart, which, as the elegantly melting Gray says, 'melancholy has marked for her own.'" The acknowledgment of marriage between him and Jean Armour had just been destroyed, which, as he says himself, caused his heart to die within him.

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow'r,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure — must dust
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie gem!

Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet, — neighbour
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet, — moisture
Wi' spreckled breast,
When upward-springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east.[2]

1 "The address 'To a Mountain Daisy' is a poem of the same nature with the address 'To a Mouse,' though somewhat inferior in point of originality, as well as in the interest produced. To extract out of incidents so common, and seemingly so trivial as these, so fine a train of sentiment and imagery, is the surest proof, as well as the most brilliant triumph, of original genius."—CURRIE.

"He invested the most common of all the wild flowers of the earth with immortal beauty to all eyes, far beyond that of the rarest, till a tear as of pity might fall down manly cheeks on the dew-drop nature gathers on its 'snawy bosom sun-ward spread.'"—PROF. WILSON.

It may be mentioned that Burns's admired predecessor, Robert Fergusson, had also selected such simple themes for poetic treatment. Compare, for instance, his poems "On Seeing a Butterfly in the Street," "Ode to the Gowdspink," &c.

The name universally applied in Scotland to the common daisy is the *gowan*, but Burns, as appears above, discarded his first-chosen title, "The Gowan", in favour of a designation for the flower apparently invented by himself. Perhaps by "Mountain Daisy" he meant to indicate that the flower intended was the wild flower, and not that grown in gardens. He may also have thought that "gowan" alone was ambiguous, there being several other gowans (with special epithets) besides *the* gowan.

2 "I have seldom met with an image more truly pastoral than that of the lark in the second stanza. Such strokes as these mark the pencil of the poet, which delineates nature with the precision of intimacy, yet with the delicate colouring of beauty and of taste."—HENRY MACKENZIE.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth,
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth peeped
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield,
High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield; must
But thou, beneath the random bield shelter
O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field, dry
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed
And low thou lies.

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betray'd,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soil'd is laid
Low i' the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er.

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
By human pride or cunning driv'n
To mis'ry's brink,
Till wrench'd of ev'ry stay but Heav'n,
He, ruin'd, sink!

Ev'n thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crush'd beneath the furrow's weight,
Shall be thy doom!

SONG—AGAIN REJOICING NATURE SEES.

TUNE—"*Johnny's Gray Breeks.*

The gloom that pervades this song points it out as probably a composition of that dreary period (the spring of 1786) to which the pieces immediately following belong. See notes to these.

Again rejoicing nature sees
Her robe assume its vernal hues,
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steep'd in morning dews.
And maun I still on Menie[1] doat, must
And bear the scorn that's in her ee? eye
For it's jet, jet black, an' it's like a hawk,
An' it winna let a body be![2] will not

In vain to me the cowslips blaw,
In vain to me the vi'lets spring;
In vain to me, in glen or shaw, wood
The mavis and the lintwhite sing. linnet
And maun I still, &c.

The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks, attentive
But life to me 's a weary dream,
A dream of ane that never wauks. wakes
And maun I still, &c.

The wanton coot the water skims,
Among the reeds the ducklings cry,
The stately swan majestic swims,
And every thing is blest but I.
And maun I still, &c.

The sheep-herd steeks his faulding slap, shuts fold-gate
And owre the moorlands whistles shill, shrill
Wi' wild, unequal, wand'ring step,
I meet him on the dewy hill.
And maun I still, &c.

And when the lark, 'tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side, wakens
And mounts and sings on fluttering wings,
A woe-worn ghaist I hameward glide. ghost
And maun I still, &c.

[1] "Menie is the common abbreviation of Mariamne."—R. B.——It is more correctly the popular pet name for Marion and Williamina.'

[2] This chorus, Burns tells us, was "part of a song the composition of a gentleman in Edinburgh, a particular friend of the author's." The "gentleman" Mr. Scott Douglas would identify with the poet himself; and "Menie" he regards as a transparent substitute for "Jeanie," Jean Armour to wit. The poet has incurred obligations to Gray's "Elegy" in this piece. Currie and others have objected to the chorus, as perpetually interfering with the sentiment of the song itself; everyone will probably feel the force of such an objection.

Come, Winter, with thine angry howl,
And raging bend the naked tree;
Thy gloom will soothe my cheerless soul,
When nature all is sad like me!
And maun I still, &c.

THE LAMENT.

OCCASIONED BY THE UNFORTUNATE ISSUE OF A FRIEND'S AMOUR.

Alas! how oft does goodness wound itself,
And sweet affection prove the spring of woe.—HOME.

O thou pale orb, that silent shines,
While care-untroubled mortals sleep!
Thou seest a wretch that inly pines,
And wanders here to wail and weep!
With woe I nightly vigils keep,
Beneath thy wan unwarming beam;
And mourn, in lamentation deep,
How life and love are all a dream.

I joyless view thy rays adorn
The faintly-markèd distant hill:
I joyless view thy trembling horn,
Reflected in the gurgling rill:
My fondly-fluttering heart, be still!
Thou busy pow'r, Remembrance, cease!
Ah! must the agonizing thrill
For ever bar returning peace!

No idly-feign'd poetic pains
My sad, love-lorn lamentings claim;
No shepherd's pipe—Arcadian strains;
No fabled tortures, quaint and tame:
The plighted faith; the mutual flame;
The oft-attested pow'rs above;
The promis'd Father's tender name:
These were the pledges of my love!

Encircled in her clasping arms,
How have the raptur'd moments flown!
How have I wish'd for fortune's charms,
For her dear sake, and hers alone!
And must I think it?—is she gone,
My secret heart's exulting boast?
And does she heedless hear my groan?
And is she ever, ever lost?

Oh! can she bear so base a heart,
So lost to honour, lost to truth,
As from the fondest lover part,
The plighted husband of her youth!
Alas! life's path may be unsmooth,
Her way may lie thro' rough distress!
Then who her pangs and pains will soothe,
Her sorrows share, and make them less?

Ye wingèd hours that o'er us pass'd,
Enraptur'd more, the more enjoy'd,
Your dear remembrance in my breast,
My fondly-treasur'd thoughts employ'd.
That breast how dreary now, and void,
For her too scanty once of room!
Ev'n ev'ry ray of hope destroy'd,
And not a wish to gild the gloom!

The morn, that warns th' approaching day,
Awakes me up to toil and woe:
I see the hours in long array,
That I must suffer, lingering, slow.
Full many a pang, and many a throe,
Keen recollection's direful train,
Must wring my soul, ere Phœbus, low,
Shall kiss the distant, western main.

And when my nightly couch I try,
Sore-harass'd out with care and grief,
My toil-beat nerves, and tear-worn eye,
Keep watchings with the nightly thief:
Or if I slumber, fancy, chief,
Reigns haggard-wild, in sore affright:
Ev'n day, all-bitter, brings relief,
From such a horror-breathing night.

O! thou bright queen, who o'er th' expanse,
Now highest reign'st, with boundless sway!
Oft has thy silent-marking glance
Observ'd us, fondly-wand'ring, stray!
The time, unheeded, sped away,
While love's luxurious pulse beat high,
Beneath thy silver-gleaming ray,
To mark the mutual-kindling eye.

Oh! scenes in strong remembrance set!
Scenes, never, never, to return!
Scenes, if in stupor I forget,
Again I feel, again I burn!

From ev'ry joy and pleasure torn,
Life's weary vale I wander thro':
And hopeless, comfortless, I'll mourn
A faithless woman's broken vow.[1]

TO RUIN.

All hail! inexorable lord!
At whose destruction-breathing word,
The mightiest empires fall!
Thy cruel woe-delighted train,
The ministers of grief and pain,
A sullen welcome, all!
With stern-resolv'd, despairing eye,
I see each aimèd dart;
For one has cut my dearest tie,
And quivers in my heart.[2]

[1] This poem, though said to be written on the unfortunate issue of *a friend's* amour, was in reality the result of the poet's own personal feelings during that most unhappy passage of his life, in the early part of 1786, when Jean Armour was forced by her parents to discard him, and to destroy the private nuptial engagement or marriage agreement that had passed between them. The misery into which this plunged the poet and the pangs which he seems to have suffered from wounded affection and injured pride may be seen from his poems and letters. In his autobiographical letter to Dr. Moore he writes:—"The unfortunate story that gave rise to the printed poem, the 'Lament,' was a most melancholy affair, which I cannot yet bear to reflect on, and had very nearly given me one or two of the principal qualifications for a place among those who have lost the chart, and mistaken the reckoning of rationality." The poem first appeared in the Kilmarnock edition of his works which were passing through the press at this very time, in the midst of his affliction, with the view of raising a small sum of money to carry him to the West Indies. In one of his letters to Mr. David Brice of Glasgow, dated June 12th, 1786, he says:—"I just write to let you know that there is such a worthless, rhyming reprobate as your humble servant still in the land of the living, though I can scarcely say in the place of hope. . . . Poor ill-advised ungrateful Armour came home [from Paisley] on Friday last. . . . What she thinks of her conduct now, I don't know; one thing I do know—she has made me completely miserable. Never man loved, or rather adored, a woman more than I did her; and to confess a truth between you and me, I do still love her to distraction after all. . . . May Almighty God forgive her ingratitude and perjury to me, as I from my very soul forgive her; and may his grace be with her and bless her in all her future life! I can have no nearer idea of the place of eternal punishment than what I have felt in my own breast on her account. . . . And now for a grand cure: the ship is on her way home that is to take me out to Jamaica: and then, farewell, dear old Scotland! and farewell, dear ungrateful Jean! for never, never will I see you more!" The reader must not suppose, however, that the poet's misery was entirely unbroken. He found consolation in a new love in place of the old; and strange as it may seem, the letter just quoted was written about a month after the poet's farewell meeting with Highland Mary, while the poem above would probably be written some little time before that tender episode. In the letter he represents himself as all the time loving Jean to distraction, though in fact he had already pledged himself to Mary, and had even (in a letter to John Arnot) treated Jean Armour's desertion of him in quite a burlesque vein. See also note to the "Farewell."

[2] The "dart" that

> Cut my dearest tie,
> And quivers in my heart,

is an allusion to Jean Armour's enforced desertion of him, which, though "Hungry Ruin had him in the wind" he felt to be, of all his ills, that which he could least easily bear. See note to preceding poem.

The jingle of the last four lines of each stanza of this poem, and of the ode to "Despondency" which directly follows, is, we think, even were the rhymes absolutely faultless, inappropriate to the sentiments of the pieces. It is admirably adapted, however, to lighter themes, such as form the staple of the first "Epistle to Davie."

Then low'ring, and pouring,
The storm no more I dread;
Tho' thick'ning and black'ning,
Round my devoted head.

And, thou grim pow'r, by life abhorr'd,
While life a pleasure can afford,
Oh! hear a wretch's pray'r!
No more I shrink appall'd, afraid;
I court, I beg thy friendly aid,
To close this scene of care!
When shall my soul, in silent peace,
Resign life's joyless day;
My weary heart its throbbings cease,
Cold mould'ring in the clay?
No fear more, no tear more,
To stain my lifeless face;
Enclaspèd, and graspèd
Within thy cold embrace?

DESPONDENCY—AN ODE.

"I think it is one of the greatest pleasures attending a poetic genius, that we can give our woes, cares, joys, and loves an embodied form in verse, which to me is ever immediate ease."—R. B.

Oppress'd with grief, oppress'd with care,
A burden more than I can bear,
I set me down and sigh:
O life! thou art a galling load,
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I!
Dim backward as I cast my view,
What sick'ning scenes appear!
What sorrows yet may pierce me thro',
Too justly I may fear!
Still caring, despairing,
Must be my bitter doom;
My woes here shall close ne'er,
But with the closing tomb!

Happy, ye sons of busy life,
Who, equal to the bustling strife,
No other view regard!
Ev'n when the wishèd end's denied,
Yet while the busy means are plied,
They bring their own reward:

Whilst I, a hope-abandon'd wight,
Unfitted with an aim,
Meet ev'ry sad returning night,
And joyless morn the same;
You, bustling, and justling,
Forget each grief and pain;
I, listless, yet restless,
Find every prospect vain.

How blest the Solitary's lot,
Who, all-forgetting, all-forgot,
Within his humble cell,
The cavern wild with tangling roots,
Sits o'er his newly-gather'd fruits,
Beside his crystal well![1]
Or, haply, to his ev'ning thought,
By unfrequented stream,
The ways of men are distant brought,
A faint collected dream:
While praising, and raising
His thoughts to heav'n on high,
As wand'ring, meand'ring,
He views the solemn sky.

Than I, no lonely hermit plac'd
Where never human footstep trac'd,
Less fit to play the part;
The lucky moment to improve,
And just to stop, and just to move,
With self-respecting art:
But ah! those pleasures, loves, and joys,
Which I too keenly taste,
The Solitary can despise,
Can want, and yet be blest!
He needs not, he heeds not,
Or human love or hate,
Whilst I here must cry here,
At perfidy ingrate!

Oh! enviable, early days,
When dancing thoughtless pleasure's maze,
To care, to guilt unknown!
How ill exchang'd for riper times,
To feel the follies, or the crimes
Of others, or my own!

[1] Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a reverend hermit grew;
The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruit, his drink the crystal well.
—Parnell's *Hermit.*

Ye tiny elves that guiltless sport
Like linnets in the bush,
Ye little know the ills ye court,
When manhood is your wish!
The losses, the crosses,
That active man engage!
The fears all, the tears all,
Of dim-declining age![1]

POETICAL REPLY TO AN INVITATION.[2]

Sir,
Yours this moment I unseal,
And faith, I am gay and hearty!
To tell the truth, an' shame the deil,
I am as fou as Bartie:[3]
But Foorsday, sir, my promise leal, Thursday
Expect me o' your party,
If on a beastie I can speel, climb
Or hurl in a cartie.—Robert Burns. ride

Machlin, Monday Night, 10 o'clock.

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.,

MAUCHLINE,[6]

RECOMMENDING A BOY.

Mosgaville,[4] *May* 3, 1786.

I hold it, sir, my bounden duty
To warn you how that Master Tootie,
Alias, Laird M'Gaun,[5]
Was here to hire yon lad away
'Bout whom ye spak the tither day, other
An' wad hae don't aff han': would at once

[1] The darkening views of his lot, expressed in this poem, point with sufficient distinctness to the period of its composition as being that to which the three immediately preceding pieces belong.

[2] To whom this "Reply" was sent is not known.

[3] One of the many humorous designations given by the peasantry of Ayrshire to the devil.

[4] The proper appellation, of which Mossgiel is a contraction.

[5] "Master Tootie was a dealer in cows. It was his common practice to cut the nicks or markings from the horns of cattle, to disguise their age."—Cromek.

[6] The village of Mauchline is situated nine miles to the south of Kilmarnock, on the road from Glasgow to Dumfries, and is intimately connected with the personal and literary history of Burns. The years of his life between the twenty-fifth and twenty-eighth were spent at Mossgiel, not far from Mauchline,—the years during which he wrote his principal poems, and when, to use the language of Mr. Lockhart, "his character came out in all its brightest lights, and in all but its darkest shadows." As the chief seat of an assembled population in his neighbourhood, this village appropriated a large share of the notice of the

But lest he learn the callan tricks, boy
As, faith, I muckle doubt him,
Like scrapin' out auld Crummie's nicks, an old cow
An' tellin' lies about them;
As lieve, then, I'd have then, willingly
Your clerkship he should sair, serve
If sae be, ye may be
Not fitted otherwhere.

Altho' I say't, he's gleg enough, sharp
An' 'bout a house that's rude an' rough,
The boy might learn to swear;

poet during this important era. To it he resorted, after labour, for the pleasures of society. There he presided in the debating club, or shone over the bowl. It was the scene of the "Holy Fair," and of the "Jolly Beggars." Here dwelt John Dow or Dove and Nanse Tinnock, both of whom catered for the delectation—perchance also the obfuscation—of the public. His mistress, Jean Armour, was one of the "six proper young belles" of Mauchline whom he celebrates. He proposes to meet Lapraik at "Mauchline race," or "Mauchline fair." Its minister was that Daddie Auld, whom he has characterized so ungently; and one of its elders was that Holy Willie into whose mouth he has put so remarkable an exposition of rigid Calvinism. And here was the residence of his friend Gavin Hamilton, whose friendship was unquestionably one of the most important circumstances of his early life.

Mauchline, a place of some antiquity, is a neatly-built village situated on a slope, about a mile from the river Ayr. The church which existed in Burns's day was a low ungainly building, since supplanted by a handsome modern Gothic edifice. The burial-ground surrounding the old edifice was more particularly the scene of the "Holy Fair." Near the church stood a plain, but not uncomfortable inn, referred to in the "Holy Fair" as the "change-house" (*i.e.* inn). It was a favourite resort of Burns, who, on the back window of one of the upper rooms, scribbled an amusing epitaph on the host, John Dow ("Johnny Pigeon"), in which he made out the religion of that worthy to be a mere comparative appreciation of his various liquors. From the same back window he could converse in the language of the eyes with his Jean, whose father's house was immediately behind, in the lane denominated the Cowgate. The reader may recollect an allusion to this lane in the "Holy Fair." The house of Mr. Gavin Hamilton was in Burns's time the most conspicuous object in the village, and one of the most interesting. Part of the edifice formed a portion of what was called the castle, having been formerly connected with the Priory of Mauchline: the rest of the house was comparatively modern.

Mr. Gavin Hamilton was a writer, or legal practitioner, of highly respectable character—a man of spirit and intelligence, generous, affable, and enlightened. Unfortunately, his religious practice did not square with the notions of the then minister of Mauchline, the "Daddie Auld" already alluded to, who, in 1785, is found in the session records to have summoned him for rebuke, on the four following charges:—1. Unnecessary absence from church for five consecutive Sundays (apparently the result of some dispute about a poor's-rate); 2. Setting out on a journey to Carrick on a Sunday; 3. Habitual, if not total neglect of family worship; 4. Writing an abusive letter to the session in reference to some of their former proceedings respecting him. Strange though this prosecution may seem, it was strictly accordant with the right assumed by clergymen at that period to inquire into the private habits of parishioners. It was fortunately, however, mixed up with some personal motives in the members of the session, which were so apparent to the presbytery, to which Mr. Hamilton appealed, that that reverend body ordered the proceedings to be stopped, and all notice of them expunged from the records. Prepossessions of more kinds than one induced Burns to let loose his irreverent muse in satire against the persecutors of Mr. Hamilton; and the result was several poems, in which, as many are inclined to think, religion itself suffers in common with those whom he holds up as abusing it. About two years after, when Burns had commenced the Edinburgh chapter of his life, a new offence was committed by Mr. Hamilton. He had, on a Sunday morning, ordered a servant to take in some potatoes which happened to have been left out in the garden after being dug. This came to the ears of the minister, and Mr. Hamilton was summoned to answer for the offence. Some ludicrous details occur in the session records. It is there alleged that two and a half rows of potatoes were dug on the morning in question, by Mr. Hamilton's express order, and carried home by his daughter: nay, so keen had the spirit of persecution been, that the rows had been formally measured, and found to be each eleven feet long; so that twenty-seven feet and a half altogether had been dug! The presbytery or synod treated this prosecution in the same way as the former, and Burns did not overlook it in his poems. He alludes to it in "Holy Willie's Prayer," when he makes that individual implore a curse upon Mr. Hamilton's

—— basket and his store,
Kail and *potatoes*—

and on several other occasions.

But then wi' you, he'll be sae taught,
An' get sic fair example straught, — such straight
I hae na ony fear.
Ye'll catechize him every quirk,
An' shore him weel wi' hell; — threaten
An' gar him follow to the kirk—— — make
—Aye when ye gang yoursel'.
If ye then, maun be then — must
Frae hame this comin' Friday, — from home
Then please, sir, to lea'e, sir,
The orders wi' your lady.

My word of honour I hae gi'en,
In Paisley John's,[1] that night at e'en,
To meet the warld's worm; — worldly reptile
To try to get the twa to gree, — agree
An' name the airles an' the fee, — earnest money
In legal mode an' form:
I ken he weel a snick can draw,[2] — take fraudulent advantage
When simple bodies let him; — persons
An' if a devil be at a',
In faith, he's sure to get him.
To phrase you, an' praise you,
Ye ken your Laureat scorns:
The prayer still, you share still,
Of grateful Minstrel Burns.

SONG—MY HIGHLAND LASSIE, O.

This song, in the words of Burns himself, "was a composition of mine in very early life, before I was at all known in the world. My Highland Lassie was a warm-hearted, charming young creature as ever blessed a man with generous love." Both this and the next song derived their inspiration from the same source, the heroine of both being Highland Mary (Mary Campbell), the heroine also of the more famous "To Mary in Heaven."

Nae gentle dames, tho' e'er sae fair, — high-born
Shall ever be my muse's care;
Their titles a' are empty show;
Gie me my Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen sae bushy, O,
Aboon the plain sae rushy, O, — above
I sit me down wi' right good will,
To sing my Highland Lassie, O.

Oh, were yon hills and valleys mine,
Yon palace and yon gardens fine!

[1] John Dow's inn.
[2] Similarly Satan is called a "sneck-drawing dog" in the "Address to the Deil." See note to that poem (page 116, vol. i.), explaining the term.

The world then the love should know
I bear my Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

But fickle fortune frowns on me,[1]
And I maun cross the raging sea; must
But while my crimson currents flow
I'll love my Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

Altho' thro' foreign climes I range,
I know her heart will never change,
For her bosom burns with honour's glow,
My faithful Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

For her I'll dare the billows' roar,
For her I'll trace a distant shore,
That Indian wealth may lustre throw
Around my Highland Lassie, O.
Within the glen, &c.

She has my heart, she has my hand,
By sacred troth and honour's band!
Till the mortal stroke shall lay me low,
I'm thine, my Highland Lassie, O.
Farewell the glen sae bushy, O!
Farewell the plain sae rushy, O!
To other lands I now must go,
To sing my Highland Lassie, O!

SONG—WILL YE GO TO THE INDIES, MY MARY?

TUNE—"*Ewe-Bughts, Marion.*"

"In my very early years, when I was thinking of going to the West Indies, I took the following farewell of a dear girl. . . . You must know that all my earlier love-songs were the breathings of ardent passion, and though it might have been easy in after times to have given them a polish, yet that polish, to me whose they were, and who perhaps alone cared for them, would have defaced the legend of the heart which was so faithfully inscribed on them. Their uncouth simplicity was, as they say of wines, their race."—BURNS TO THOMSON, 26th Oct. 1792. See introductory note to preceding song.

Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
And leave auld Scotia's shore?
Will ye go to the Indies, my Mary,
Across th' Atlantic's roar?

[1] This refers to the poet's project of going to Jamaica, which occupied his mind at the time the song was written—the spring or early summer of 1786.

O sweet grows the lime and the orange,
And the apple on the pine;
But a' the charms o' the Indies
Can never equal thine.

I hae sworn by the Heavens to my Mary,
I hae sworn by the Heavens to be true;
And sae may the Heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand;
O plight me your faith, my Mary;
Before I leave Scotia's strand.

We hae plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join:
And curst be the cause that shall part us!
The hour and the moment o' time!

EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.[1]

May, 1786.

I lang hae thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Tho' it should serve nae other end
Than just a kind *memento;*
But how the subject-theme may gang,
Let time and chance determine;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

Ye'll try the world soon, my lad,
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye'll find mankind an unco squad, strange
And muckle they may grieve ye:
For care and trouble set your thought,
Ev'n when your end's attained;
And a' your views may come to nought,
Where ev'ry nerve is strained.

[1] This epistle was addressed to Andrew Aiken, son of Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, to whom the "Cotter's Saturday Night" is inscribed. Andrew Aiken was successful in life as a merchant in Liverpool, and afterwards held the appointment of English consul at Riga, where he died in 1831. His son P. F. Aiken published *Memorials of Robert Burns, with Selections of his Poems*, in 1876.——"The epistle displays much shrewdness, an intimate acquaintance with human nature, and great kind-heartedness. When Burns employed his mind in giving rules for moral and prudential conduct, no man was a sounder philosopher."—MOTHERWELL.

I'll no say, men are villains a';
The real, harden'd wicked,
Wha hae nae check but human law,
Are to a few restricked:
But, och! mankind are unco weak, strangely
An' little to be trusted;
If self the wavering balance shake,
It's rarely right adjusted!

Yet they wha fa' in fortune's strife,
Their fate we should na censure,
For still th' important end of life,
They equally may answer;
A man may hae an honest heart,
Tho' poortith hourly stare him; poverty
A man may tak' a neibor's part,
Yet hae nae cash to spare him.

Aye free, aff han' your story tell, off-hand
When wi' a bosom crony;
But still keep something to yoursel',
Ye scarcely tell to ony.
Conceal yoursel' as weel's ye can
Frae critical dissection;
But keek thro' ev'ry other man, peep
Wi' sharpen'd, slee inspection.[1] sly

The sacred lowe o' weel-plac'd love. flame
Luxuriantly indulge it;
But never tempt th' illicit rove,
Tho' naething should divulge it:
I waive the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard of concealing;
But, och! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling![2]

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her;
And gather gear by ev'ry wile wealth
That's justified by honour;

[1] This stanza has often been objected to as advising a degree of cunning unworthy of an ingenuous mind. The spirit of it is certainly very unlike Burns's usual sentiments; yet in regard to the Highland Mary episode in his life he seems to have practised a secrecy, if not made use of misleading statements, quite in accordance with the advice here given.

[2] In a holograph copy of this poem, dated Mossgiel, May 15th, 1786, the following additional stanza is inserted at this point.

If ye hae made a step aside,
Some hap mistake o'erta'en you,
Yet still keep up a decent pride,
And ne'er o'er far demean you:
Time comes wi' kind oblivious shade,
And daily darker sets it,
And if nae mair mistakes are made,
The world soon forgets it.

This stanza Burns doubtless felt to be wanting in the terseness and point of the rest, and, therefore, omitted it in the MS. sent for publication. But, as Chambers justly observes, "it throws so valuable a light on the state of his own mind at this crisis, that it certainly ought not to be suppressed, though we should not desire to see it replaced in the poem."

Not for to hide it in a hedge,
  Nor for a train-attendant,
But for the glorious privilege
  Of being independent.

The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip
  To haud the wretch in order; hold
But where ye feel your honour grip,
  Let that aye be your border; always
Its slightest touches, instant pause—
  Debar a' side pretences;
And resolutely keep its laws,
  Uncaring consequences.

The great Creator to revere
  Must sure become the creature;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
  And ev'n the rigid feature:
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range,
  Be complaisance extended;
An atheist's laugh's a poor exchange
  For Deity offended!

When ranting round in pleasure's ring, revelling
  Religion may be blinded;
Or if she gie a random sting,
  It may be little minded;
But when on life we're tempest-driv'n,
  A conscience but a canker— without
A correspondence fix'd wi' heav'n,
  Is sure a noble anchor!

Adieu, dear, amiable youth!
  Your heart can ne'er be wanting:
May prudence, fortitude, and truth
  Erect your brow undaunting!
In ploughman's phrase, "God send you speed,"
  Still daily to grow wiser;
And may you better reck the rede, advice
  Than ever did th' adviser![1]

[1] William Niven of Kilbride, Maybole, the "Willie" who was Burns's schoolfellow and crony during the short period he attended the school at Kirkoswald, always asserted that this epistle was originally addressed to him, but afterwards transferred to Andrew Aiken from motives of policy.

ADDRESS OF BEELZEBUB

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY.

To the Right Honourable the Earl of Breadalbane, President of the Right Honourable and Honourable the Highland Society, which met on the 23d of May last, at the Shakspeare, Covent Garden, to concert ways and means to frustrate the designs of five hundred Highlanders, who, as the society were informed by Mr. M'Kenzie, of Applecross, were so audacious as to attempt to escape from their lawful lords and masters, whose property they were, by emigrating from the lands of Mr. M'Donald, of Glengarry, to the wilds of Canada, in search of that fantastic thing—LIBERTY.

Long life, my lord, an' health be yours,
Unscath'd by hunger'd Highland boors;
Lord grant nae duddie desperate beggar, ragged
Wi' dirk, claymore, or rusty trigger,
May twin auld Scotland o' a life bereave
She likes—as lambkins like a knife.

Faith, you and Applecross were right
To keep the Highland hounds in sight;
I doubt na! they wad bid nae better would desire
Than let them ance out owre the water; once (get) across
Then up amang the lakes and seas
They'll mak what rules and laws they please;
Some daring Hancock, or a Franklin,
May set their Highland bluid a-ranklin';
Some Washington again may head them,
Or some Montgomery, fearless, lead them,
Till God knows what may be effected
When by such heads and hearts directed—
Poor dunghill sons of dirt and mire
May to Patrician rights aspire!
Nae sage North, now, nor sager Sackville,
To watch and premier o'er the pack vile,
An' whare will ye get Howes and Clintons
To bring them to a right repentance,
To cowe the rebel generation, quell
An' save the honour o' the nation?
They, an' be damn'd! what right hae they
To meat or sleep, or light o' day?
Far less to riches, pow'r, or freedom,
But what your lordship likes to gie them?

But hear, my lord! Glengarry, hear!
Your hand's owre light on them, I fear!
Your factors, grieves, trustees, and bailies, farm overseers
I canna' say but they do gaylies; fairly well
They lay aside a' tender mercies,
An' tirl the hallions to the birses; strip clowns hides

Yet while they're only poind't and herriet, distrained robbed
They'll keep their stubborn Highland spirit;
But smash them! crush them a' to spails! chips
An' rot the dyvors i' the jails! bankrupts
The young dogs, swinge them to the labour;
Let wark an' hunger mak them sober!
The hizzies, if they're aughtlins fawsont, young women anyway
Let them in Drury-lane be lesson'd! [comely
An' if the wives an' dirty brats
Come thigging at your doors and yetts, begging gates
Flaffan wi' duds and gray wi' beas', fluttering vermin
Frighten awa your deucks an' geese, ducks
Get out a horse whip or a jowler,
The langest thong, the fiercest growler,
And gar the tatter'd gypsies pack make
Wi' a' their bastards on their back!
Go on, my lord! I lang to meet you,
An' in my house at hame to greet you;
Wi' common lords ye shanna mingle, shall not
The benmost neuk beside the ingle, innermost corner fireside
At my right han' assign'd your seat
'Tween Herod's hip an' Polycrate,—
Or if you on your station tarrow, murmur
Between Almagro and Pizarro,
A seat, I'm sure ye're weel deservin't;
An' till ye come—Your humble servant,

BEELZEBUB.[1]

June 1st, Anno Mundi 5790 [A. D. 1786.]

[1] The "Address of Beelzebub" was first published in the *Edinburgh Magazine* of Feb. 1818. The person who sent it had got the MS. of it in Burns's handwriting from a friend, who again had got it from the poet's intimate and crony, Rankine, of Adamhill. Burns must have misapprehended the scope of the meeting of the Highland Society he refers to in the dedication or superscription. A notice of it appeared in the *Edinburgh Advertiser* of May 30th, 1786:—"On Tuesday [May 23] there was a meeting of the Highland Society at London for the encouragement of the fisheries in the Highlands, &c. Three thousand pounds were immediately subscribed by eleven gentlemen present for this particular purpose. The Earl of Breadalbane informed the meeting that 500 persons had agreed to emigrate from the estates of Mr. M'Donald of Glengarry; that they had subscribed money, purchased ships, &c., to carry their design into effect. The noblemen and gentlemen agreed to co-operate with government to frustrate their design; and to recommend to the principal noblemen and gentlemen in the Highlands to endeavour to prevent emigration, by improving the fisheries, agriculture, and manufactures, and particularly to enter into a subscription for that purpose." What is the dread of one generation becomes the desire of another. Highland proprietors, instead of subscribing to prevent the people on their estates from emigrating, have since then subscribed to assist suitable persons to seek "fresh woods and pastures new" in emigration districts. Mr. M'Kenzie of Applecross, in Ross-shire, who is here reprehended along with the Earl of Breadalbane, was in his time regarded, and is still remembered, as a liberal-minded and excellent landlord, so anxious for the welfare of his tenantry that he spontaneously relinquished his feudal claims upon their labour.

A DREAM.[1]

Thoughts, words, and deeds, the statute blames with reason;
But surely *Dreams* were ne'er indicted *Treason*.

On reading, in the public papers, the Laureate's[2] Ode, with the other parade of June 4, 1786, the author was no sooner dropt asleep than he imagined himself transported to the birthday levee; and in his dreaming fancy made the following Address.

Guid-mornin' to your Majesty!
May Heaven augment your blisses,
On every new birth-day ye see,
A humble bardie wishes!
My bardship here, at your levee,
On sic a day as this is, such
Is sure an uncouth sight to see,
Amang the birth-day dresses
Sae fine this day.

I see ye're complimented thrang, busily
By monie a lord and lady;
"God save the king!" 's a cuckoo sang
That's unco easy said aye; very
The poets, too, a venal gang,
Wi' rhymes weel-turn'd and ready,
Wad gar ye trow ye ne'er do wrang, would make believe
But aye unerring steady,
On sic a day. such

For me! before a monarch's face,
Ev'n there I winna flatter; will not
For neither pension, post, nor place,
Am I your humble debtor:

[1] It is said that this poem injured Burns at court—at least, prevented the then existing administration from recommending him to the patronage of royalty. Some of his friends, fearing this, endeavoured to persuade him to keep it out of the Edinburgh edition; but in vain. We cannot see why the poem should have given offence to any but fools. It displays throughout an affectionate loyalty, mingled up with the soundest observation; and this should have gone far to excuse the homeliness of its address. On 30th April, 1787, he wrote to Mrs. Dunlop, one of those friends:—"I set as little by princes, lords, clergy, critics, &c., as all these respective gentry do by my bardship." And in the same letter he says, "Poets, much my superiors, have so flattered those who possessed the adventitious qualities of wealth and power, that I am determined to flatter no created being, either in prose or verse."

[2] Thomas Warton was then poet-laureate. His ode for June 4, 1786, begins thus:—

When Freedom nursed her native fire
In ancient Greece, and ruled the lyre,
Her bards disdainful, from the tyrant's brow
The tinsel gifts of flattery tore,
But paid to guiltless power their willing vow,
And to the throne of virtuous kings, &c.

In his first "Epistle to John Lapraik," Burns had said—

Gie me ae spark o' Nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;

And this as a set-off against some learned rhymers who

Confuse their brains in college classes,
. . . . . .
An' syne they think to climb Parnassus
By dint o' Greek!

Burns is immeasurably superior, both in ease, strength, and freshness, to the laureate, and Oxford professor of poetry. But Warton was better than his ode would lead us to picture him, and the author of *The History of English Poetry* deserves well of students. Besides, Burns was too sensible and modest a man to speak lightly of learning otherwise than by way of joke, and was himself throughout life a *learner* to the limit of his opportunities.

So, nae reflection on your grace,
  Your kingship to bespatter;
There's monie waur been o' the race, worse
  And aiblins ane been better perhaps one
    Than you this day.

'Tis very true, my sov'reign king,
  My skill may weel be doubted:
But facts are chiels that winna ding, will not be worsted
  An' downa be disputed: cannot
Your royal nest, beneath your wing,
  Is e'en right reft an' clouted, riven patched
And now the third part of the string,
  An' less, will gang about it
    Than did ae day.[1] one

Far be't frae me that I aspire from
  To blame your legislation,
Or say, ye wisdom want, or fire,
  To rule this mighty nation:
But, faith! I muckle doubt, my Sire, much
  Ye've trusted ministration
To chaps, wha, in a barn or byre, cow-house
  Wad better fill'd their station would (have)
    Than courts yon day.

And now ye've gi'en auld Britain peace,
  Her broken shins to plaster;
Your sair taxation does her fleece, sore
  Till she has scarce a tester;
For me, thank God, my life's a lease,
  Nae bargain wearing faster,
Or, faith! I fear, that wi' the geese,
  I shortly boost to pasture behoved
    I' the craft some day. paddock

I'm no mistrusting Willie Pitt,
  When taxes he enlarges,
(An' Will's a true guid fallow's get,[2] child
  A name not envy spairges,) asperses
That he intends to pay your debt,
  An' lessen a' your charges;
But, G–d-sake! let nae saving-fit
  Abridge your bonnie barges
    An' boats this day.[3]

[1] Alluding to the loss of the American colonies, formally given up at the close of the American war, by the treaties of 1783.

[2] William Pitt being the son of the celebrated Earl of Chatham.

[3] In the spring of 1786 a great deal of discussion took place in the House of Commons about reducing the naval force, and particularly the giving up of 64-gun ships. Hence the allusion here to abridging the "bonnie barges an' boats."

Adieu, my Liege! may freedom geck — disport herself
  Beneath your high protection;
An' may ye rax Corruption's neck, — stretch
  An' gie her for dissection!
But since I'm here, I'll no neglect,
  In loyal, true affection,
To pay your Queen, with due respect,
  My fealty and subjection
    This great birth-day.

Hail! Majesty Most Excellent!
  While nobles strive to please ye,
Will ye accept a compliment
  A simple bardie gies ye?
Thae bonnie bairn-time,[1] Heav'n has lent, — those children
  Still higher may they heeze ye — raise
In bliss, till fate some day is sent
  For ever to release ye
    Frae care that day. — from

For you, young potentate of Wales,[2]
  I tell your Highness fairly,
Down pleasure's stream, wi' swelling sails,
  I'm tauld ye're driving rarely; — told
But some day ye may gnaw your nails,
  An' curse your folly sairly, — sorely
That e'er ye brak Diana's pales,
  Or rattl'd dice wi' Charlie,[3]
    By night or day.

Yet aft a ragged cowt's been known — colt
  To make a noble aiver; — cart-horse
Sae, ye may doucely fill a throne, — soberly
  For a' their clish-ma-claver: — tattle
There, him[4] at Agincourt wha shone,
  Few better were or braver;
And yet, wi' funny, queer Sir John,[5]
  He was an unco shaver — sad madcap
    For monie a day.

For you, right rev'rend Osnaburg,[6]
  Nane sets the lawn-sleeve sweeter,
Although a ribbon at your lug — ear
  Wad been a dress completer: — would (have)

[1] See note p. 123, vol. i., for explanation and origin of this term.

[2] George IV., then Prince of Wales, already notorious for his dissolute and extravagant habits.

[3] Charles James Fox, almost equally celebrated as a gamester and as a statesman, and with whom and other distinguished Whigs the Prince of Wales then associated.

[4] King Henry V.—R. B.

[5] Sir John Falstaff: *vide* Shakspeare.—R. B.

[6] The Duke of York, son of George III., and titular bishop of Osnaburg.

As ye disown yon paughty dog — haughty
That bears the keys of Peter,
Then, swith! an' get a wife to hug, — haste!
Or, troth! ye'll stain the mitre
Some luckless day.

Young, royal Tarry Breeks,[1] I learn,
Ye've lately come athwart her;
A glorious galley,[2] stem an' stern,
Weel rigg'd for Venus' barter;
But first hang out, that she'll discern
Your hymeneal charter,
Then heave aboard your grapple airn, — iron
An', large upon her quarter,
Come full that day.

Ye, lastly, bonnie blossoms a',
Ye royal lasses dainty,
Heav'n mak' you guid as weel as braw, — finely dressed
An' gie you lads a-plenty: — sweethearts
But sneer na British boys awa',
For kings are unco scant aye; — very
An' German gentles are but sma',
They're better just than want aye,
On onie day.

God bless you a'! consider now,
Ye're unco muckle dautet; — very much caressed
But, ere the course o' life be thro',
It may be bitter sautet: — salted
An' I hae seen their coggie fou, — wooden dish full
That yet hae tarrow't at it; — lingered through loathing
But or the day was done, I trow, — ere
The laggen[3] they hae clautet — scraped
Fu' clean that day.[4]

[1] William IV., then post-captain in the royal navy.

[2] Alluding to the newspaper account of a certain royal sailor's amour.—R. B.——The Duke of Clarence's connection with the celebrated Mrs. Jordan did not take place till 1791, so the poet cannot be referring to it. William IV. was born in 1765.

[3] The angle between the side and bottom of a wooden dish.—*Burns's Glossary.*

[4] "Few of the commentators have ventured to discuss the merits of 'The Dream.' They are of a high order—the gaiety as well as the keenness of the satire, and the vehement rapidity of the verse, are not the only attractions. Even the prose introduction is sarcastic: the poet, on reading the laureate's Ode, fell asleep—a likely consequence, for the birthday strains of those times were something of the dullest." —ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.——"'The Dream,' if not a high, is a very characteristic effort: there never was an easier hand-gallop of verse."—ALEXANDER SMITH. ——Dr. Hately Waddell quotes, as an "unconscious commentary" on this stanza, "the well-known verses attributed to the Princess Amelia—herself one, and the fairest, of these very blossoms and 'royal lasses dainty:'—

Unthinking, idle, wild, and young,
I laughed, and danced, and talked, and sung
And proud of health, of freedom vain,
Dreamed not of sorrow, care, or pain,—
Concluding, in those hours of glee,
That all the world was made for me.

But when the hour of trial came,
When sickness shook this trembling frame
When folly's gay pursuits were o'er,
And I could sing and dance no more,—
It then occurred how sad 'twould be
Were this world only made for me.

A DEDICATION

TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.[1]

Expect na, sir, in this narration,
A fleechin, fleth'rin dedication, supplicating, flattering
To roose you up, an' ca' you guid, praise
An' sprung o' great an' noble bluid,
Because ye're surnam'd like His Grace,[2]
Perhaps related to the race;
Then when I'm tir'd—and sae are ye,
Wi' mony a fulsome, sinfu' lie,
Set up a face, how I stop short, make a pretence
For fear your modesty be hurt.

This may do—maun do, sir, wi' them wha must
Maun please the great folk for a wamefou; bellyful
For me! sae laigh I needna bow, so low
For, Lord be thankit, I can plough;
And when I downa yoke a naig, cannot nag
Then, Lord be thankit, I can beg;[3]
Sae I shall say, an' that's nae flatt'rin,
It's just sic poet, an' sic patron.

The Poet, some guid angel help him!
Or else, I fear some ill ane skelp him. slap
He may do weel for a' he's done yet,
But only he's no just begun yet.

The Patron, (sir, ye maun forgie me, must
I winna lie, come what will o' me) will not
On ev'ry hand it will allow'd be,
He's just—nae better than he should be.

I readily and freely grant,
He downa see a poor man want; cannot
What's no his ane he winna tak it, own
What ance he says he winna break it; once

[1] See a previous note (p. 10), in which an account of this early friend of Burns is given.

[2] The Duke of Hamilton.

[3] "The old-remembered beggar, even in my own time . . . was expected to merit his quarters by something beyond an exposition of his distresses. He was often a talkative, facetious fellow, prompt at repartee, and not withheld from exercising his power that way by any respect of persons, his patched cloak giving him the privilege of the ancient jester. To be a *guid crack*—that is, to possess talents for conversation—was essential to the trade of a 'puir body' of the more esteemed class; and Burns, who delighted in the amusement their discourses afforded, seems to have looked forward with gloomy firmness to the possibility of himself becoming, one day or other, a member of their itinerant society. In his poetical works it is alluded to so often, as perhaps to indicate that he considered the consummation as not utterly improbable. Thus in the fine dedication of his works to Gavin Hamilton, he says:

> And when I downa yoke a naig,
> Then, Lord be thankit, I can beg.

Again, in his 'Epistle to Davie, a Brother Poet,' he states that, in their closing career,

> The last o't, the warst o't,
> Is only but to beg.'

—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Ought he can lend he'll no refus't,
Till aft his guidness is abus'd;
And rascals whyles that do him wrang, sometimes
Ev'n that, he does na mind it lang:
As master, landlord, husband, father,
He does na fail his part in either.

But then, nae thanks to him for a' that;
Nae godly symptom ye can ca' that;
It's naething but a milder feature,
Of our poor, sinfu', corrupt nature:
Ye'll get the best o' moral works,
'Mang black Gentoos and pagan Turks,
Or hunters wild on Ponotaxi,
Wha never heard of orthodoxy.
That he's the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word and deed,[1]
It's no thro' terror of d–mn–tion;
It's just a carnal inclination.

Morality, thou deadly bane,
Thy tens o' thousands thou hast slain!
Vain is his hope, whose stay and trust is
In moral mercy, truth, and justice!

No—stretch a point to catch a plack; third of a penny
Abuse a brother to his back;
Steal thro' a winnock frae a wh—re, window
But point the rake that taks the door;
Be to the poor like ony whunstane, whinstone
And haud their noses to the grunstane; hold grindstone
Ply ev'ry art o' legal thieving;
No matter—stick to sound believing!

Learn three-mile pray'rs, and half-mile graces,[2]
Wi' weel-spread looves, an' lang wry faces; palms
Grunt up a solemn, lengthen'd groan,
And damn a' parties but your own;
I'll warrant then, ye're nae deceiver,
A steady, sturdy, staunch believer.

O ye wha leave the springs of Calvin,
For gumlie dubs o' your ain delvin'! muddy puddles
Ye sons of Heresy and Error,
Ye'll some day squeel in quaking terror!
When Vengeance draws the sword in wrath,
And in the fire throws the sheath;

1 See him the poor man's friend in need,
The gentleman in word an' deed—
—*Epistle to M Math.*

2 "Three-mile prayers, and hauf-mile graces" is also an expression used in the "Epistle to M'Math," which, we need scarcely remind the reader, describes the not very cordial relations that existed between Gavin Hamilton and some of the neighbouring clergy.

When Ruin, with his sweeping besom,
Just frets till Heaven commission gies him:
While o'er the harp pale Mis'ry moans,
And strikes the ever-deep'ning tones,
Still louder shrieks, and heavier groans!

Your pardon, sir, for this digression,
I maist forgat my dedication; — almost forgot
But when divinity comes 'cross me,
My readers still are sure to lose me.

So, sir, ye see 'twas nae daft vapour, — no foolish
But I maturely thought it proper,
When a' my works I did review,
To dedicate them, sir, to you:
Because (ye need na tak it ill)
I thought them something like yoursel'.

Then patronise them wi' your favour,
And your petitioner shall ever—
I had amaist said, ever pray, — almost
But that's a word I need na say:
For prayin' I hae little skill o't;
I'm baith dead-sweer, an' wretched ill o't; — both extremely averse
But I'se repeat each poor man's pray'r, — I shall
That kens or hears about you, Sir— — knows

"May ne'er Misfortune's gowling bark, — howling
Howl thro' the dwelling o' the Clerk![1]
May ne'er his gen'rous, honest heart,
For that same gen'rous spirit smart!
May Kennedy's far honour'd name[2]
Lang beet his hymeneal flame, — feed with fuel
Till Hamiltons, at least a dizen, — dozen
Are frae their nuptial labours risen:
Five bonnie lasses round their table,
And seven braw fellows, stout an' able — handsome
To serve their king and country weel,
By word, or pen, or pointed steel!
May health and peace, with mutual rays.
Shine on the evening o' his days;
Till his wee curlie John's ier-oe, — great-grandchild
When ebbing life nae mair shall flow,
The last, sad, mournful rites bestow!"

I will not wind a lang conclusion,
Wi' complimentary effusion:

[1] Mr. Hamilton was popularly known by this name, because he was a *writer*, as an attorney or solicitor is called in Scotland, and, perhaps, because he may have acted in the capacity of clerk to some of the county courts.

[2] Mr. Hamilton's wife was a Kennedy.

But whilst your wishes and endeavours
Are blest with fortune's smiles and favours,
I am, dear Sir, with zeal most fervent,
Your much indebted, humble servant.

But if (which Pow'rs above prevent!)
That iron-hearted carl, Want,
Attended in his grim advances,
By sad mistakes, and black mischances,
While hopes, and joys, and pleasures fly him,
Make you as poor a dog as I am,—
Your humble servant then no more;
For who would humbly serve the poor?
But, by a poor man's hopes in heaven!
While recollection's power is given,
If, in the vale of humble life,
The victim sad of fortune's strife,
I, thro' the tender gushing tear,
Should recognize my master dear,
If friendless, low, we meet together,
Then, sir, your hand—my friend and brother![1]

STANZAS ON NAETHING.[2]

EXTEMPORE EPISTLE TO GAVIN HAMILTON.

To you, sir, this summons I've sent,
  Pray, whip till the pownie is fraething; frothing
But if you demand what I want,
  I'll honestly answer you—naething.

Ne'er scorn a poor Poet like me,
  For idly just living and breathing,
While people of every degree
  Are busy employed about—naething.

Poor Centum-per-centum may fast,
  And grumble his hurdies their claithing, hips clothing
He'll find when the balance is cast,
  He's gane to the devil for—naething. gone

[1] It might have been expected that this poem would have opened the volume published at Kilmarnock, but it does not, though it is included in the work. Its freedom of sentiment and its irreverent handling of orthodoxy may have seemed even to its reckless writer, unknown as he then was beyond his own district, too much like a challenge to more rigid professors, and savouring too much of self-complacency for the piece to take so prominent a position.

[2] The above extempore verses were first published in Macmillan's edition of Burns, edited by Alexander Smith (London, 1865), and were extracted from a Common-place Book which the poet probably sent to Mrs. Dunlop, and which, now in a fragmentary condition, was then in the possession of Mr. Macmillan. In the MS. no date of composition is given, but it is evident from the second last stanza that the author's expected departure for Jamaica was approaching.

The courtier cringes and bows,
  Ambition has likewise its plaything;
A coronet beams on his brows;
  And what is a coronet?—naething.

Some quarrel the Presbyter gown,
  Some quarrel episcopal graithing; vestments
But every good fellow will own
  The quarrel is a' about—naething.

The lover may sparkle and glow,
  Approaching his bonnie bit gay thing;
But marriage will soon let him know
  He's gotten—a buskit up naething.

The Poet may jingle and rhyme,
  In hopes of a laureate wreathing,
And when he has wasted his time,
  He's kindly rewarded wi'—naething.

The thundering bully may rage,
  And swagger and swear like a heathen;
But collar him fast, I'll engage,
  Ye'll find that his courage is—naething.

Last night wi' a feminine Whig—[1]
  A poet she couldna put faith in;
But soon we grew lovingly big,
  I taught her her terrors were—naething.

Her Whigship was wonderful pleased,
  But charmingly tickled wi' ae thing;
Her fingers I lovingly squeezed,
  And kissed her, and promised her—naething.

The priest anathémas may threat—
  Predicament, sir, that we're baith in;
But when honour's reveillé is beat
  The holy artillery's—naething.

And now I must mount on the wave—
  My voyage perhaps there is death in;
But what is a watery grave?
  The drowning a Poet is naething.

And now as grim death's in my thought,
  To you, sir, I make this bequeathing;
My service as long as ye've aught,
  And my friendship, by God, when ye've naething!

[1] The word is not used here in its political sense, but in that of one of the rigidly orthodox. So the heterodox John Goudie is called by the poet the "terror o' the Whigs."

TO A MEDICAL GENTLEMAN

(DR. MACKENZIE, MAUCHLINE)

INVITING HIM TO ATTEND A MASONIC ANNIVERSARY MEETING ON ST. JOHN'S DAY, 24TH JUNE, 1786.

Friday first's the day appointed,
By our Right Worshipful anointed,
To hold our grand procession;
To get a blad o' Johny's morals, quantity
And taste a swatch o' Manson's[1] barrels, sample
I' the way of our profession.
Our Master and the Brotherhood
Wad a' be glad to see you: would
For me, I would be mair than proud, more
To share the mercies wi' you. refreshments
If death, then, wi' scaith, then,
Some mortal heart is hechtin, threatening
Inform him, and storm him, bully
That Saturday ye'll fecht him. fight

ROBERT BURNS.

MOSSGIEL, AN. M. 5790.

FAREWELL TO THE BRETHREN OF ST. JAMES'S LODGE,

TARBOLTON.[2]

TUNE—"*Good night and joy be wi' you a'!*"

Adieu! a heart-warm, fond adieu!
Dear brothers of the *mystic tie!*
Ye favour'd, ye *enlighten'd* few.
Companions of my social joy!
Tho' I to foreign lands must hie,
Pursuing Fortune's slidd'ry ba', slippery ball
With melting heart, and brimful eye,
I'll mind you still, tho' far awa'.

Oft have I met your social band,
And spent the cheerful, festive night;
Oft, honour'd with supreme command,
Presided o'er the *sons of light:*

[1] The keeper of the Tarbolton ale-house in which the brethren used to assemble. The reference to "Johny's morals" is not understood.

[2] Tarbolton is a village in Ayrshire, about 7 miles to the north-east of Ayr, in the parish of the same name—a plain country village without any feature of particular note. Tarbolton parish contains the farm of Lochlea, at which Burns lived from 1777 to 1784, and the whole locality has many reminiscences of the poet. In regard to his residence in the Tarbolton neighbourhood see the biographical sketch in vol. i. Wilson — the famous Dr. Hornbook — was parish schoolmaster of Tarbolton. The St. James's Lodge held their meetings in the back room of the humble cottage-like village inn. Of this lodge Burns was elected depute-master in July, 1784, and re-elected the following year: this explains the allusion to "supreme command," &c., in the second stanza. In all probability the verses were recited or sung about the 23d June, 1786.

And by that *hieroglyphic* bright,
Which none but *Craftsmen* ever saw!
Strong Mem'ry on my heart shall write
Those happy scenes when far awa'.

May Freedom, Harmony, and Love,
Unite you in the *Grand Design*,
Beneath th' Omniscient Eye above,
The glorious *Architect* divine!
That you may keep th' *unerring line*,
Still rising by the *plummet's law*,
Till *Order* bright completely shine,
Shall be my pray'r when far awa'.

And *you*,[1] farewell! whose merits claim,
Justly, that *highest badge* to wear!
Heav'n bless your honour'd, noble name,
To Masonry and Scotia dear!
A last request permit me here,
When yearly ye assemble a',
One round, I ask it with a tear,
To him, the Bard that's far awa'.

ON A SCOTCH BARD,[2]

GONE TO THE WEST INDIES.

A' ye wha live by sowps o' drink, — sups
A' ye wha live by crambo-clink, — rhyming
A' ye wha live and never think,
Come mourn wi' me!
Our billie's gi'en us a' a jink, — brother dodge
An' owre the sea.

Lament him a' ye rantin' core, — rollicking corps
Wha dearly like a random splore, — frolic
Nae mair he'll join the merry roar,
In social key;
For now he's ta'en anither shore,
An' owre the sea.

The bonnie lasses weel may wiss him,
And in their dear petitions place him:
The widows, wives, an' a' may bless him,
Wi' tearfu' ee; — eye
For weel I wat they'll sairly miss him — wot sorely
That's owre the sea.

[1] The reference here is probably to Captain James Montgomery, Grandmaster of St. James's Lodge at this time, as stated by Chambers.

[2] This was written on himself in 1786, in anticipation of his departure for the West Indies. In one MS. copy in the author's handwriting, the line in the first verse,

Our billie's gi'en us a' a jink,

stands thus:

Our billie, *Rob*, has ta'en a jink.

O Fortune, they hae room to grumble!
Hadst thou ta'en aff some drowsy bummle, bungler
Wha can do nought but fyke an' fumble, fuss
'Twad been nae plea;
But he was gleg as ony wumble, sharp wimble
That's owre the sea.

Auld cantie Kyle may weepers wear, hearty
An' stain them wi' the saut, saut tear; salt
'Twill mak' her poor auld heart, I fear,
In flinders flee; splinters
He was her laureate monie a year,
That's owre the sea.

He saw misfortune's cauld nor'-wast
Lang mustering up a bitter blast;
A jillet brak his heart at last,[1] jilt
Ill may she be!
So, took a berth afore the mast,
An' owre the sea.

To tremble under Fortune's cummock, rod
On scarce a bellyfu' o' drummock, meal and water
Wi' his proud, independent stomach,
Could ill agree;
So, row't his hurdies in a hammock, rolled his thighs
An' owre the sea.

He ne'er was gi'en to great misguiding,
Yet coin his pouches wad na bide in; pockets would not
Wi' him it ne'er was under hiding;
He dealt it free:
The muse was a' that he took pride in,
That's owre the sea.

Jamaica bodies, use him weel, folks
An' hap him in a cozie biel: cover snug shelter
Ye'll find him aye a dainty chiel, likable fellow
And fu' o' glee;
He wad na wrang'd the vera deil, would not (have)
That's owre the sea.

Fareweel, my rhyme-composing billie! brother
Your native soil was right ill-willie;
But may you flourish like a lily,
Now bonnilie!
I'll toast ye in my hindmost gillie, gill (of whisky)
Tho' owre the sea.

[1] This of course refers to Jean Armour's desertion of him, which did not quite break his heart however.

SONG—ELIZA.[1]

TUNE—"*Gilderoy.*"

From thee, Eliza, I must go,
And from my native shore;
The cruel fates between us throw
A boundless ocean's roar:
But boundless oceans, roaring wide,
Between my love and me,
They never, never can divide
My heart and soul from thee!

Farewell, farewell, Eliza dear,
The maid that I adore!
A boding voice is in mine ear,
We part to meet no more!
But the last throb that leaves my heart,
While death stands victor by,
That throb, Eliza, is thy part,
And thine that latest sigh!

A BARD'S EPITAPH.[2]

Is there a whim-inspirèd fool,
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule, — over
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool, — bashful cringe abjectly
Let him draw near;
And owre this grassy heap sing dool, — lament
And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song,
Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,

[1] Discarded by Jean Armour, and driven from her father's door with contumely, Burns's affections turned towards the heroine of this song, and, in a far more intense degree towards his Highland Lassie (Mary Campbell), to whom he writes farewell strains fully as impassioned. Gilbert Burns, Chambers, and others identify Miss Betty (Miller), who figures as one of the Mauchline belles, as the inspirer of these evil-boding verses. From the following obituary notice, however, which appeared in the newspapers about the year 1827, it would appear that there is another claimant for this honour. "At Alva, on the 28th ult., in the 74th year of her age, Mrs. Elizabeth Black, relict of the late Mr. James Stewart, vintner there. . . . She was Burns's ELIZA. She was born and brought up in Ayrshire, and in the bloom of youth was possessed of no ordinary share of personal charms. She early became acquainted with Burns, and made no small impression on his heart. She possessed several love-epistles he had addressed to her. It was when Scotia's bard intended emigrating from his own to a foreign shore that he wrote the stanzas beginning, 'From thee, Eliza, I must go'—the subject being of course Elizabeth Black." This claim is, however, rather weak; Elizabeth Black was acquainted with the Burns family before they came to Mossgiel, but by this time she had left that part of the country, and they appear to have lost sight of her. Moreover, if she died in 1827, aged 74, she must have been six years older than Burns, and therefore hardly likely to have been a sweetheart of his.

[2] This beautiful and affecting poem was composed as a fitting conclusion to the volume published at Kilmarnock in 1786. The analysis of his own character here is perfect so far as it goes.

That weekly this area throng.
O, pass not by!
But, with a frater-feeling strong,
Here, heave a sigh.

Is there a man, whose judgment, clear,
Can others teach the course to steer,
Yet runs, himself, life's mad career,
Wild as the wave;
Here pause—and, thro' the starting tear
Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name.

Reader, attend—whether thy soul
Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,
Or darkling grubs this earthly hole,
In low pursuit;
Know, prudent, cautious self-control
Is wisdom's root.[1]

EPITAPH FOR ROBERT AIKEN, ESQ.[2]

Know thou, O stranger to the fame
Of this much lov'd, much honour'd name!
(For none that knew him need be told)
A warmer heart death ne'er made cold.

[1] "Whom did the poet intend should be thought of as occupying that grave over which, after modestly setting forth the moral discernment and warm affections of the 'poor inhabitant,' it is supposed to be inscribed that—

Thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name—

Whom but himself—himself anticipating the too probable termination of his own course? Here is a sincere and solemn avowal—a public declaration from his own will—a confession at once devout, poetical, and human—a history in the shape of a prophecy! What more was required of the biographer than to have put his seal to the writing, testifying that the foreboding had been realized, and the record was authentic?"—WORDSWORTH.——"Wordsworth owed much to Burns, and a style of perfect plainness, relying for effect solely on the weight and force of that which with entire fidelity it utters, Burns could show him.

The poor inhabitant below
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame;
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name.

"Every one will be conscious of a likeness here to Wordsworth; and if Wordsworth did great things with this nobly plain manner, we must remember, what indeed he himself would always have been forward to acknowledge, that Burns used it before him."—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

[2] Robert Aiken, writer or solicitor in Ayr, was one of Burns's earliest friends and patrons. He spoke in high terms of Burns's poetry wherever he went, and contributed materially to the spread of the poet's fame. By way of marking his sense of Aiken's friendly attentions, Burns inscribed to him "The Cotter's Saturday Night,"—and indited the above kindly and graceful epitaph.

EPITAPH FOR GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.[1]

The poor man weeps—here Gavin sleeps,
Whom canting wretches blam'd;
But with such as he, where'er he be,
May I be sav'd or damn'd!

EPITAPH ON WEE JOHNY.[2]

HIC JACET WEE JOHNY.

Whoe'er thou art, O reader, know,
That death has murder'd Johny!
An' here his body lies fu' low——
For saul he ne'er had ony.

SONG—THE LASS O' BALLOCHMYLE.[4]

TUNE—"*Miss Forbes' Farewell to Banff.*"

"My two songs on Miss W. Alexander ('The Lass o' Ballochmyle') and Miss Peggy Kennedy ('Young Peggy blooms') were likewise tried yesterday by a jury of literati, and found defamatory libels against the fastidious powers of Poesy and Taste, and the author forbidden to print them under pain of forfeiture of character. I cannot help almost shedding a tear to the memory of two songs that had cost me some pains, and that I valued a good deal, but I must submit."—BURNS TO GAVIN HAMILTON, March 8, 1787.

'Twas even—the dewy fields were green,
On ev'ry blade the pearls hang;[3]
The zephyr wanton'd round the bean,
And bore its fragrant sweets alang:

[1] Gavin Hamilton was another of the poet's early friends. In this case also, Burns repaid his kindness in song. The "Dedication to Gavin Hamilton," has received the praise of the critics; elsewhere his "takin' arts wi' grit and sma'," are prominently mentioned; and in the "Epistle to the Rev. John M'Math," his virtues are expatiated upon at length.

[2] Wee Johny was long supposed to be John Wilson, the printer of the first edition of the poems. It was considered to be a great joke that he should have printed his own "*hic jacet,*" unsuspecting of its application. But Burns had no cause to think meanly of his printer, nor was Wilson such a simpleton as to be a ready or likely butt. The real "Wee Johny" was a miserly, ill-conditioned cow-feeder in the neighbourhood of Mauchline, who was occasionally, through sheer ignorance, impertinent to the poet. He is said to have been frequently styled "Saulless Johny." See p. 439, vol. i. of Hately Waddell's *Life and Works of Burns*, and letter in *Kilmarnock Standard* of Nov. 29th, 1884, the statements in which were corroborated by Miss Begg (Burns's niece) at the date of writing.

[3] *Hang* is not the present but the past tense; the conjugation of the verb in Scotland being *hing, hang, hung.*

[4] The "Braes of Ballochmyle" extend along the right or north bank of the Ayr, between the village of Catrine and Howford Bridge, and are situated at the distance of about two miles from Burns's farm of Mossgiel. They form the most important part of the pleasure-grounds connected with Ballochmyle House, the seat of a family named Alexander, one of the members of which, Miss Wilhelmina Alexander, was the subject of the poem. Presenting a mixture of steep bank and precipice, clothed with the most luxuriant natural wood, while a fine river sweeps round beneath them, they form a scene of bewildering beauty, exactly such as a poet would love to dream in, during a July eve. A short while before the incident which gave rise to the song, Balloch-

In ev'ry glen the mavis sang,
All nature listening seem'd the while,
Except where green-wood echoes rang,
Amang the braes o' Ballochmyle.

With careless step I onward stray'd,
My heart rejoic'd in nature's joy,
When musing in a lonely glade,
A maiden fair I chanc'd to spy.
Her look was like the morning's eye,
Her air like nature's vernal smile,

myle, its broad lands, and lovely braes had been parted with, in consequence of declining circumstances, by the representative of an old and once powerful Ayrshire family, Sir John Whitefoord. This led to the composition by Burns of a song "The Braes o' Ballochmyle," already given.

Currie's account of the circumstances attending the composition of the present song is as follows:—"The whole course of the Ayr is fine; but the banks of that river, as it bends to the eastward above Mauchline, are singularly beautiful, and they were frequented, as may be imagined, by our poet in his solitary walks. Here the muse often visited him. In one of these wanderings he met among the woods a celebrated beauty of the west of Scotland—a lady of whom it is said, that the charms of her person correspond with the character of her mind. This incident gave rise, as might be expected, to a poem, of which an account will be found in the following letter, in which he inclosed it to the object of his inspiration." The letter is dated 18th November, 1786, some months after the song must have been written. After apologizing for the liberty of taking the lady whom he is addressing for the subject of his lyric, he proceeds—"I had roved out as chance directed, in the favourite haunts of my muse—the banks of the Ayr, to view nature in all the gaiety of the vernal year. The sun was flaming over the distant western hills: not a breath stirred the crimson opening blossom, or the verdant spreading leaf. It was a golden moment for a poetic heart. I listened to the feathered warblers, pouring their harmony on every hand, with a congenial kindred regard, and frequently turned out of my path, lest I should disturb their little songs, or frighten them to another station. Surely, said I to myself, he must be a wretch indeed, who, regardless of your harmonious endeavour to please him, can eye your elusive flights to discover your secret recesses, and to rob you of all the property nature gives you, your dearest comforts, your helpless nestlings. Even the hoary hawthorn twig that shot across the way, what heart but at such a time must have been interested in its welfare, and wished it preserved from the rudely-browsing cattle, or the withering eastern blast? Such was the scene—and such the hour, when, in a corner of my prospect, I spied one of the finest pieces of Nature's workmanship that ever crowned a poetic landscape, or blest a poet's eye: those visionary bards excepted who hold commerce with aerial beings! Had Calumny and Villainy taken my walk, they had at that moment sworn eternal peace with such an object. What an hour of inspiration for a poet! It would have raised plain, dull, historic prose into metaphor and measure! The inclosed song was the work of my return home; and perhaps but poorly answers what might have been expected from such a scene." Burns closed the letter with a request for the lady's consent to the publication of the song, in the second edition of his poems, but (a good deal to his chagrin) received no reply.

Miss Alexander has been blamed by various writers for her reserve; and certainly it is now to be regretted that she was not so fortunate as to cultivate the friendship of the poet. But when the plain fact is known, all such commentaries appear vain. Burns, though he wrote poetry which no contemporary, gentle or simple, approached, was, at this time at least, locally known chiefly for an unusual share of some of the failings of humanity. His character had been reported to Miss Alexander in terms which caused her to shrink from his correspondence; and while she did not fail to appreciate the beauty of his poetry, and the value of the compliment he had paid to her, she deemed it best, both for her own sake and for the feelings of her poetical admirer, to allow the affair to rest at the point which it had already reached.

She afterwards displayed no imperfect sense of the honour which the genius of Burns has conferred upon her. She preserved the original manuscript of the poem and letter with the greatest care; and these are now preserved in separate frames, and are to be seen hung up on the walls of the back parlour of the farmhouse of Mossgiel, having been placed there by the late Boyd Alexander, for the inspection of visitors.

Miss Alexander died on the 5th June, 1843. She was aged eighty-eight at the time of her decease, and must therefore have been Burns's senior by three or four years.

"When I first read that song it made the hairs of my head creep, I thought it so beautiful. Burns took it heinously amiss that Miss Alexander never made any reply to the flaming letter which he sent her along with the song. I think it would have been very unnatural if she had; for how could she think with patience of a great black curly ploughman, with brawny limbs and broad shoulders, straining her nightly to his bosom. It was really too much of a good thing this!"—JAMES HOGG.

Perfection whisper'd, passing by,
"Behold the lass o' Ballochmyle!"

Fair is the morn in flowery May,
And sweet is night in autumn mild,
When roving thro' the garden gay,
Or wandering in the lonely wild.
But Woman, Nature's darling child!
There all her charms she does compile;
Ev'n there her other works are foil'd
By the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

O had she been a country maid,
And I the happy country swain,
Tho' sheltered in the lowest shed
That ever rose on Scotland's plain:
Thro' weary winter's wind and rain,
With joy, with rapture, I would toil;
And nightly to my bosom strain
The bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle!

Then pride might climb the slipp'ry steep,
Where fame and honours lofty shine;
And thirst of gold might tempt the deep,
Or downward seek the Indian mine;
Give me the cot below the pine,
To tend the flocks or till the soil,
And every day have joys divine,
With the bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

A FAREWELL.[1]

Farewell, dear friend! may guid luck hit you,
And, 'mang her favourites admit you!
If e'er Detraction shore to smit you, threaten infect
May nane believe him!
And ony deil that thinks to get you,
Good Lord deceive him.

[1] These lines were addressed by the poet to his friend Mr. John Kennedy, in an undated letter from Kilmarnock, which, from internal evidence, may be assigned to some day between 3d and 16th August, 1786. Burns was then contemplating his voyage to Jamaica as immediate, and he mentions the recent publication of his poems thus:—"I have at last made my public appearance, and am solemnly inaugurated into the numerous class [of authors]." Another piece addressed to Kennedy will be found on p. 157, vol. i.

LINES WRITTEN ON A BANK NOTE.[1]

Wae worth thy power, thou cursed leaf,
Fell source o' a' my woe and grief!
For lack o' thee I've lost my lass,
For lack o' thee I scrimp my glass.
I see the children of affliction
Unaided, through thy curs'd restriction.
I've seen the oppressor's cruel smile
Amid his hapless victim's spoil,
And, for thy potence, vainly wish'd
To crush the villain in the dust.
For lack o' thee I leave this much loved shore,
Never, perhaps, to greet old Scotland more.

THE FAREWELL.[2]

The valiant in himself, what can he suffer?
Or what does he regard his single woes?
But when, alas! he multiplies himself,
To dearer selves, to the lov'd tender fair,
To those whose bliss, whose beings hang upon him,
To helpless children! then, O then! he feels
The point of misery fest'ring in his heart,
And weakly weeps his fortune like a coward.
Such, such am I! undone!—THOMSON'S *Edward and Eleonora*.

Farewell, old Scotia's bleak domains,
Far dearer than the torrid plains
Where rich ananas blow!
Farewell, a mother's blessing dear!
A brother's sigh! a sister's tear!
My Jean's heart-rending throe![3]
Farewell, my Bess![4] tho' thou'rt bereft
Of my parental care;
A faithful brother I have left,
My part in him thou'lt share!

[1] This note of the Bank of Scotland for one pound, dated 1st March, 1780, was probably part of the proceeds of the Kilmarnock edition of the poems, and the "Lines," therefore, were written in August, 1786; the last two lines give the strongest internal evidence for this. The piece appeared first in the *Morning Chronicle* of 27th May, 1814. The first edition of the poems with which they were incorporated was that of Gilbert Burns, 1820.

[2] "The Farewell" seems to bear internal evidence of the period of its composition, namely, the end of August, 1786, when the poet was looking forward to his voyage to the West Indies as in the immediate future; and when the event mentioned in next note was close at hand. This latter would seem to have stirred up kinder feelings in the poet's mind towards Jean than he had recently entertained.

[3] This no doubt refers to Jean Armour's approaching confinement. On the 3d September, 1786, Jean was delivered of twins, a boy and a girl.

[4] The poet's illegitimate daughter, the "sonsie, smirking, dear-bought Bess" of the "Inventory." In a deed of assignment, dated 22d July, 1786, Burns made over all his goods, with the prospective profits of his poems, to his brother Gilbert, who in return "binds and oblidges himself to aliment, clothe and educate my said natural child in a suitable manner, as if she was his own."

Adieu too, to you too,
My Smith,[1] my bosom frien';
When kindly you mind me,
O then befriend my Jean!

What bursting anguish tears my heart!
From thee, my Jeannie, must I part!
Thou, weeping, answ'rest, "No!"
Alas! misfortune stares my face,
And points to ruin and disgrace,
I, for thy sake, must go![2]
Thee, Hamilton and Aiken[3] dear,
A grateful, warm adieu!
I, with a much-indebted tear,
Shall still remember you!
All-hail then, the gale then,
Wafts me from thee, dear shore!
It rustles, and whistles—
I'll never see thee more!

VERSES TO AN OLD SWEETHEART

AFTER HER MARRIAGE.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A COPY OF HIS POEMS, PRESENTED TO THE LADY.[4]

Once fondly lov'd, and still remember'd dear;
Sweet early object of my youthful vows!
Accept this mark of friendship, warm, sincere,—
Friendship! 'tis all cold duty now allows.

And when you read the simple, artless rhymes,
One friendly sigh for him—he asks no more,—
Who distant burns in flaming torrid climes,
Or haply lies beneath th' Atlantic roar.

[1] James Smith, merchant in Mauchline—the same person to whom one of the poet's best epistles is addressed.

[2] When thus taking an anguished farewell of his Jean did no recollection rise up in the mind of Burns, we wonder, of the Highland Mary, with whom a few short months before he had "lived one day of parting love" on the banks of the Ayr, vowing eternal constancy, and exchanging Bibles in pledge thereof? Mary was at this time with her own people in the Highlands, preparing, to use the poet's own words, "for our projected change of life;" yet, from this poem one would think that no rival to Jean had ever engaged his affections.

[3] Gavin Hamilton and Robert Aiken. These gentlemen were at this period the chief advisers and patrons of the poet. They have already been repeatedly mentioned in our pages.

[4] In the Glenriddell MS. there is this note:—"Written on the blank leaf of a copy of the first edition of my poems, which I presented to an old sweetheart, then married. 'Twas the girl I mentioned in my letter to Dr. Moore, where I speak of taking the sun's altitude." This was Peggy Thomson, of Kirkoswald, who became the wife of a Mr. Neilson, of that place, whom Burns describes as an "old acquaintance and a most worthy fellow." See also the song "Peggy," vol. i.

THE CALF.

TO THE REV. JAMES STEVEN,

On his text, Malachi ch. iv. 2: "And ye shall go forth, and grow up, like calves of the stall."

Right, Sir! your text I'll prove it true,
  Tho' heretics may laugh;
For instance, there's yoursel' just now,
  God knows, an unco *calf!* — remarkable

And should some patron be so kind,
  As bless you wi' a kirk,
I doubt na, Sir, but then we'll find,
  Ye're still as great a *stirk.* — young bullock

But, if the lover's raptur'd hour
  Shall ever be your lot,
Forbid it, ev'ry heavenly power,
  You e'er should be a *stot!* — bullock

Tho' when some kind, connubial dear,
  Your but-and-ben adorns, — parlour and kitchen
The like has been that you may wear
  A noble head of *horns.*

And in your lug, most reverend James, — ear
  To hear you roar and rowte, — bellow
Few men o' sense will doubt your claims
  To rank amang the *nowte.* — cattle

And when ye're number'd wi' the dead,
  Below a grassy hillock,
Wi' justice they may mark your head—
  "Here lies a famous *bullock!*"[1]

[1] Gilbert Burns tells us, that, on Sunday, 3d September, 1786, "the poet had been with Mr. Gavin Hamilton in the morning, who said jocularly to him, when he was going to church, in allusion to the injunction of some parents to their children, that he must be sure to bring him a note of the sermon at mid-day: this address to the reverend gentlemen on his text was accordingly produced." The poet's own account is somewhat different. In a letter to his friend Robert Muir, Kilmarnock, written a few days after the piece was composed, he says: "The poem was nearly an extemporaneous production on a wager with Mr. Hamilton, that I would not produce a poem on the subject in a given time." The preacher was assistant to the minister of Ardrossan, but on this occasion occupied Mr. Auld's pulpit at Mauchline. He was afterwards minister of the Scots Church, Crown Court, Covent Garden, London; and ultimately minister of Kilwinning in Ayrshire. The name of "The Calf" stuck to him through life. In a letter to Burns from his younger brother, who died in London, we find this passage, dated 21st March, 1790:—"We were at Covent Garden chapel this forenoon to hear the Calf preach: he is grown very fat, and is as boisterous as ever."—Towards the evening of the Sunday on which this memorable sermon was preached, and this vigorous *jeu d'esprit* written, Jean was delivered of twins. In the same letter to Mr. Muir, the poet says, "You will have heard that poor Armour has repaid me double. A very fine boy and a girl have awakened a thought and feelings that thrill, some with tender pressure, and some with foreboding anguish, through my soul." An arrangement was made between the Burns and Armour families, that the boy should be taken care of at Mossgiel, the girl (who did not live long) kept at her mother's.

NATURE'S LAW,[1]

A POEM HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO GAVIN HAMILTON, ESQ.

Great Nature spoke; observant man obey'd.—POPE.

Let other heroes boast their scars,
The marks of sturt and strife;
And other poets sing of wars,
The plagues of human life;
Shame fa' the fun; wi' sword and gun
To slap mankind like lumber!
I sing his name, and nobler fame
Wha multiplies our number.

Great Nature spoke with air benign,
"Go on, ye human race;
This lower world I you resign;
Be fruitful and increase.
The liquid fire of strong desire,
I've pour'd it in each bosom;
Here, on this hand, does Mankind stand,
And there, is Beauty's blossom."

The Hero of these artless strains,
A lowly bard was he,
Who sung his rhymes in Coila's plains,
With meikle mirth and glee;
Kind Nature's care had given his share
Large, of the flaming current;
And all devout he never sought
To stem the sacred torrent.

He felt the powerful high behest
Thrill vital thro' and thro';
And sought a correspondent breast
To give obedience due:
Propitious Powers screen'd the young flow'rs,
From mildews of abortion;
And lo! the bard—a great reward—
Has got a double portion.

Auld canty Coil may count the day cheery
As annual it returns,
The third of Libra's equal sway
That gave another Burns,[2]

[1] These verses were published for the first time in Pickering's Aldine edition, 1839.

[2] Robert Burns, junr., one of the twins or "double portion" born to the poet on the 3d of September, 1786; he died at Dumfries, 14th May, 1857 (see note to preceding poem). He seems to have had all his sire's warm passions and imprudence, but wanted his "poetic fire."

With future rhymes, an' other times,
To emulate his sire;
To sing auld Coil in nobler style,
With more poetic fire.

Ye Powers of Peace and peaceful song,
Look down with gracious eyes;
And bless auld Coila, large and long,
With multiplying joys;
Long may she stand to prop the land,
The flow'r of ancient nations;
And Burnses spring, her fame to sing
To endless generations!

ADDRESS TO THE TOOTH-ACHE.

From a letter addressed to Creech, the publisher, dated simply "May 30th," and commencing:—"I had intended to have troubled you with a long letter, but at present the delightful sensations of an omnipotent toothache so engross all my inner man, as to put it out of my power even to write nonsense," it has been generally inferred that the following "Address" was penned about the same time. Seeing there is no other evidence to support it, this is a risky inference, to start with; and when it can be shown that Cromek, who first published the letter, supplemented conjecturally, "Ellisland, 1789," to the date, and also that the contents of the letter do not justify the assigning of this date, the period formerly set down for the composition of the poem must be wrong. Mr. W. Scott Douglas shows that the true date of the letter is 30th May, 1795, and gives fair reasons for assigning this piece to a period prior to the publication of the Edinburgh edition of the poet's works, in April, 1787. The date may then be hypothetically given as 1786

My curse upon your venom'd stang, sting
That shoots my tortur'd gums alang;
And thro' my lugs gies mony a twang, ears twinge
Wi' gnawing vengeance;
Tearing my nerves wi' bitter pang,
Like racking engines!

When fevers burn, or ague freezes,
Rheumatics gnaw, or cholic squeezes;
Our neighbours' sympathy may ease us,
Wi' pitying moan;
But thee—thou hell o' a' diseases—
They mock our groan!

Adown my beard the slavers trickle!
I throw[1] the wee stools o'er the mickle,
As round the fire the giglets keckle, giddy creatures laugh
To see me loup; leap
While raving mad, I wish a heckle
Were in their doup. posteriors

[1] The variation "kick" for "throw" seems due to the ingenuity of critics, and cannot be traced to Burns.

O' a' the num'rous human dools, sorrows
Ill har'sts, daft bargains, cutty-stools, harvests, foolish
Or worthy friends rak'd i' the mools, mould
Sad sight to see!
The tricks o' knaves, or fash o' fools, trouble
Thou bear'st the gree. carriest off the palm

Where'er that place be priests ca' hell,
Whence a' the tones o' mis'ry yell,
And ranked plagues their numbers tell,
In dreadfu' raw, row
Thou, Tooth-ache, surely bear'st the bell
Amang them a'!

O thou grim, mischief-making chiel, fellow
That gars the notes of discord squeel, makes
Till daft mankind aft dance a reel foolish
In gore a shoe-thick;—
Gie a' the faes o' Scotland's weal foes
A towmond's Tooth-ache! twelve month's

WILLIE CHALMERS.[1]

"W. Chalmers, a gentleman in Ayrshire, a particular friend of mine, asked me to write a poetic epistle to a young lady, his dulcinea. I had seen her, but was scarcely acquainted with her, and wrote as follows."—R. B.

MADAM,

Wi' braw new branks in mickle pride, fine bridle
And eke a braw new brechan, horse-collar
My Pegasus I'm got astride,
And up Parnassus pechin'; panting
Whiles owre a bush wi' downward crush sometimes over
The doited beastie stammers; stupid
Then up he gets, and off he sets,
For sake o' Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na, lass, that weel-kenn'd name well-known
May cost a pair o' blushes;
I am nae stranger to your fame,
Nor his warm-urgèd wishes.
Your bonnie face sae mild and sweet
His honest heart enamours,

[1] Chalmers was a writer or solicitor in Ayr. How far the poem tended to the success of his suit has nowhere been mentioned. Lockhart obtained this piece from Lady Harriet Don, the sister of the poet's early patron, Lord Glencairn, and it was first published by him in the second edition of his *Life of Robert Burns*, which appeared in 1829. The form of stanza here employed may have been suggested by an old Scottish lyric in the *Tea-Table Miscellany* with the title "*Omnia vincit Amor.*"

And, faith, ye'll no be lost a whit,
  Tho' waired on Willie Chalmers. expended

Auld Truth hersel' might swear ye're fair,
  And Honour safely back her,
And Modesty assume your air,
  And ne'er a ane mistak her:
And sic twa love-inspiring een such two eyes
  Might fire even holy Palmers;
Nae wonder then they've fatal been
  To honest Willie Chalmers.

I doubt na Fortune may you shore offer
  Some mim-mou'd pouther'd priestie, prim powdered
Fu' lifted up wi' Hebrew lore,
  And band upon his breastie:
But oh! what signifies to you
  His lexicons and grammars:
The feeling heart's the royal blue,
  And that's wi' Willie Chalmers.

Some gapin', glowrin', countra laird, staring land-owner
  May warsle for your favour; strive
May claw his lug, and straik his beard, scratch ear stroke
  And hoast up some palaver. cough
My bonnie maid, before ye wed
  Sic clumsy-witted hammers,
Seek Heaven for help, and barefit skelp barefooted trip
  Awa' wi' Willie Chalmers.

Forgive the Bard! my fond regard
  For ane that shares my bosom
Inspires my muse to gie 'm his dues,
  For deil a hair I roose him. flatter
May powers aboon unite you soon, above
  And fructify your amours,—
And every year come in mair dear
  To you and Willie Chalmers.

ANSWER TO A RHYMING EPISTLE FROM A TAILOR.[1]

What ails you now, ye lousie b—h,
To thresh my back at sic a pitch? such
Losh man! hae mercy wi' your natch, notching tool
  Your bodkin's bauld,

[1] Thomas Walker, a tailor, residing at Poole, near Ochiltree, and one of a pious turn of mind, sent a rhyming epistle to Burns, remonstrating with him on his alleged misdemeanours, particularly in regard to the fair sex. The epistle showed good intention on the part of the poor tailor, but nothing more.

I did na suffer half sae much
Frae Daddie Auld.[1]

What tho' at times, when I grow crouse, over keen
I gie their wames a random pouse, push
Is that enough for you to souse
Your servant sae?
Gae mind your seam you prick-the-louse
An' jag-the-flae!

King David, o' poetic brief,
Wrought 'mang the lassies sic mischief, such
As fill'd his after life wi' grief
An' bloody rants, riots
An' yet he's rank'd amang the chief
O' lang-syne saunts. saints

And maybe, Tam, for a' my cants, tricks
My wicked rhymes, an' drucken rants,
I'll gie auld Cloven-Clootie's haunts Cloven-Hoof's
An unco slip yet, surprising
An' snugly sit amang the saunts
At Davie's hip yet.

But, fegs, the Session says I maun faith must
Gae fa' upo' anither plan,
Than garrin' lasses cowp the cran making turn topsy-turvy
Clean heels owre gowdie, heels over head
And sairly thole their mithers' ban, suffer
Afore the howdy. midwife

This leads me on to tell for sport,
How I did with the Session sort—
Auld Clinkum at the inner port the bell-ringer
Cried three times, "Robin!
Come hither, lad, an' answer for't,
Ye're blam'd for jobbin'."

Wi' pinch I put a Sunday's face on,
An' snoov'd awa' before the Session— went sheepishly
I made an open, fair confession,
I scorn'd to lie;
An' syne Mess John, beyond expression, then
Fell foul o' me.

The answer of Burns to this screed of rhyme was the production given above, first printed at Glasgow in 1799, in Stewart and Meikle's *Tracts*, as by Burns, whose handiwork in it is evident enough, though other authorship has been claimed for it.

[1] See vol. i. p. xxxii.

A fornicator loon he call'd me,
An' said my faut frae bliss expell'd me;
I own'd the tale was true he tell'd me,
"But what the matter?"
Quo' I, "I fear, unless you geld me,
I'll ne'er be better!"

"Geld you," quo' he, "an' what for no?
If that your right hand, leg, or toe
Should ever prove your sp'ritual foe,
You should remember
To cut it aff; an' what for no
Your dearest member?"

"Na, na," quo' I, "I'm no for that,
Gelding's nae better nor it's ca't;
I'd rather suffer for my faut
A hearty flewit, lash
As sair owre hip as ye can draw't,
Tho' I should rue it.

"Or, gin ye like to end the bother,
To please us a'—I've just ae ither: one other
When next wi' yon lass I forgather,
Whate'er betide it,
I'll frankly gie her't a' thegither,
An' let her guide it."

But, Sir, this pleas'd them warst ava,
An' therefore, Tam, when that I saw,
I said, "Guid night," and came awa',
And left the Session;
I saw they were resolved a'
On my oppression.

THE BRIGS OF AYR,[1]

A POEM.

INSCRIBED TO JOHN BALLANTINE, ESQ., AYR.

The simple Bard, rough at the rustic plough,
Learning his tuneful trade from every bough—

[1] The two bridges of Ayr cross the river of the same name, and are respectively known as the Auld and the New Brig. The Auld Brig, the upper of the two, is about 150 yards from the New, and seems to have been erected sometime between 1470 and 1525. It consists of four lofty arches of solid architecture, but being steep and narrow, a new bridge was built in 1785–88, for which the community was largely indebted to Mr. Ballantine, who was provost during the time of its erection, and who died in 1812. To this gentleman, a banker by profession, Burns had been introduced by Mr. Robert Aiken, his earliest Ayr patron. Mr. Ballantine offered to advance money to enable the poet to bring out a second edition at Kilmarnock, but advised him rather to publish in Edinburgh. The new bridge was designed by Robert

The chanting linnet, or the mellow thrush,
Hailing the setting sun, sweet, in the green thorn bush;
The soaring lark, the perching red-breast shrill,
Or deep-ton'd plovers, gray, wild-whistling o'er the hill—
Shall he, nurs'd in the peasant's lowly shed,
To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardship steel'd,
And train'd to arms in stern misfortune's field—
Shall he be guilty of their hireling crimes,
The servile mercenary Swiss of rhymes?
Or labour hard the panegyric close,
With all the venal soul of dedicating prose?
No! though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the bard,
Fame, honest fame, his great, his dear reward!
Still, if some patron's gen'rous care he trace,
Skill'd in the secret to bestow with grace;
When Ballantine befriends his humble name,
And hands the rustic stranger up to fame,
With heartfelt throes his grateful bosom swells;
The godlike bliss, to give, alone excels.

'Twas when the stacks get on their winter hap, covering
And thack and rape secure the toil-won crap; thatch and straw-rope
Potatoe bings are snuggèd up frae scaith heaps from harm
Of coming winter's biting, frosty breath;
The bees, rejoicing o'er their summer toils,
Unnumber'd buds' an' flow'rs' delicious spoils,
Seal'd up with frugal care in massive waxen piles,
Are doom'd by man, that tyrant o'er the weak,
The death o' devils smoor'd wi' brimstone reek; smothered smoke
The thundering guns are heard on every side,
The wounded coveys, reeling, scatter wide;
The feather'd field-mates, bound by Nature's tie,
Sires, mothers, children, in one carnage lie:
(What warm, poetic heart, but inly bleeds,
And execrates man's savage, ruthless deeds!)
Nae mair the flower in field or meadow springs; no more
Nae mair the grove with airy concert rings,
Except perhaps the robin's whistling glee,
Proud o' the height o' some bit half-lang tree; small half-grown
The hoary morns precede the sunny days,
Mild, calm, serene, wide spreads the noon-tide blaze,
While thick the gossamour waves wanton in the rays.

Adam. It was so much injured by the floods of 1877 that it had to be taken down and rebuilt (1878–79), thus fulfilling the prophecy of the Auld Brig—"I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn." The Auld Brig still stands, but has latterly required extensive repairs to maintain it in a serviceable condition.—The poem was one of those added in the first Edinburgh edition of the poet's works (1787).

'Twas in that season, when a simple Bard,
Unknown and poor, simplicity's reward,
Ae night, within the ancient brugh of Ayr, one borough
By whim inspir'd, or haply press'd wi' care,
He left his bed, and took his wayward route,
And down by Simpson's[1] wheel'd the left about—
Whether impell'd by all-directing Fate,
To witness what I after shall narrate;
Or whether, rapt in meditation high,
He wander'd out he knew not where or why.
The drowsy Dungeon-clock had number'd two,
And Wallace Tower[2] had sworn the fact was true:
The tide-swoln firth, with sullen-sounding roar,
Through the still night dash'd hoarse along the shore:
All else was hush'd as Nature's closèd ee: eye
The silent moon shone high o'er tower and tree:
The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
Crept, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering stream.—

When, lo! on either hand the list'ning Bard,
The clanging sugh of whistling wings is heard; sough
Two dusky forms dart thro' the midnight air,
Swift as the gos[3] drives on the wheeling hare:
Ane on th' Auld Brig his airy shape uprears, one
The ither flutters o'er the rising piers:
Our warlock Rhymer instantly descry'd
The Sprites that owre the Brigs of Ayr preside. over
(That bards are second-sighted is nae joke,
And ken the lingo of the sp'ritual folk; know
Fays, spunkies, kelpies, a', they can explain them, sprites, water-goblins
And ev'n the very deils they brawly ken them.) very well know
Auld Brig appear'd of ancient Pictish race,
The vera wrinkles Gothic in his face:
He seem'd as he wi' Time had warstl'd lang, wrestled
Yet, teughly doure, he bade an unco bang. toughly obdurate stood a mighty stroke
New Brig was buskit in a braw new coat, dressed fine
That he, at Lon'on, frae ane Adam[4] got; from one
In's hand five taper staves as smooth's a bead,
Wi' virls and whirlygigums at the head. rings twisted ornaments

[1] A noted tavern at the Auld Brig end.—R. B.

[2] The two steeples.—R. B.——The Dungeon-clock was placed at the top of an old steeple which stood till the year 1825 in the Sandgate, not far from the new bridge. Its connection with an ancient jail was what conferred upon the clock and tower this ominous appellation. The Wallace Tower—which also carried a clock in an upper wooden portion—was an anomalous piece of old masonry in the High Street, at the head of a lane named the Mill Vennel, leading to the ford known as the Ducat Stream. Having become ruinous, an attempt was made in 1830 to repair it, which ended in the complete demolition of the ancient structure, and the erection of a new one on the same site. The new Wallace Tower is a Gothic building, 113 feet high, containing at the top the clock and bells of the Dungeon steeple, and ornamented in front with a statue of William Wallace.

[3] The gos-hawk, or falcon.—R. B.

[4] Robert Adam, the well-known architect, born 1728, died 1792. The "five taper staves" is a reference to the piers of the New Brig.

The Goth was stalking round with anxious search,
Spying the time-worn flaws in ev'ry arch;
It chanc'd his new-come neebor took his ee, neighbour eye
And e'en a vex'd and angry heart had he!
Wi' thieveless sneer to see his modish mien, spited
He, down the water, gies him this guid-e'en:—

AULD BRIG.

I doubt na, frien', ye'll think ye're nae sheep-shank[1]
Ance ye were streekit o'er frae bank to bank! stretched
But gin ye be a brig as auld as me, by the time you are
Tho', faith, that date, I doubt ye'll never see,
There'll be, if that day come, I'll wad a boddle, wager third of a penny
Some fewer whigmaleeries in your noddle. fanciful notions

NEW BRIG.

Auld Vandal, ye but show your little mense, manners
Just much about it wi' your scanty sense;
Will your poor, narrow foot-path of a street,
Where twa wheel-barrows tremble when they meet,
Your ruin'd, formless bulk o' stane and lime,
Compare wi' bonnie brigs o' modern time?
There's men o' taste would tak the Ducat Stream,[2]
Tho' they should cast the very sark an' swim, shirt
Ere they would grate their feelings wi' the view
Of sic an ugly Gothic hulk as you. such

AULD BRIG.

Conceited gowk! puff'd up wi' windy pride! fool
This monie a year I've stood the flood an' tide;
And tho' wi' crazy eild I'm sair forfairn, age sorely worn out
I'll be a brig when ye're a shapeless cairn!
As yet ye little ken about the matter,
But twa-three winters will inform you better. two or three
When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains,
Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains;
When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
Or stately Lugar's mossy fountains boil,
Or where the Greenock winds his moorland course,
Or haunted Garpal[3] draws his feeble source,
Arous'd by blust'ring winds an' spotting thowes, thaws
In mony a torrent down his snaw-broo rowes; snow-water rolls
While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat, flood
Sweeps dams, an' mills, an' brigs, a' to the gate; out of the way

[1] Think yourself no unimportant personage—a proverbial expression.

[2] A noted ford, just above the Auld Brig.—R. B.—It was at times very dangerous.

[3] The banks of *Garpal Water* is one of the few places in the West of Scotland, where those fancy-scaring beings, known by the name of *Ghaists*, still continue pertinaciously to inhabit.—R. B.

And from Glenbuck,[1] down to the Ratton-key,[2]
Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd, tumbling sea;
Then down ye'll hurl, deil nor ye never rise! tumble
And dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies: muddy splashes
A lesson sadly teaching, to your cost,
That Architecture's noble art is lost!

NEW BRIG.

Fine Architecture, trowth, I needs must say o't! in truth
The L—d be thankit that we've tint the gate o't! lost way
Gaunt, ghastly, ghaist-alluring edifices, ghost-
Hanging with threat'ning jut, like precipices;
O'er-arching, mouldy, gloom-inspiring coves,
Supporting roofs fantastic, stony groves:
Windows and doors, in nameless sculptures drest,
With order, symmetry, or taste unblest:
Forms like some bedlam statuary's dream,
The craz'd creations of misguided whim;
Forms might be worshipp'd on the bended knee,
And still the second dread command be free,
Their likeness is not found on earth, in air, or sea;
Mansions that would disgrace the building taste
Of any mason reptile, bird, or beast;
Fit only for a doited monkish race, muddle-headed
Or frosty maids forsworn the dear embrace,
Or cuifs of later times, wha held the notion blockheads
That sullen gloom was sterling true devotion;
Fancies that our guid brugh denies protection, borough
And soon may they expire, unblest with resurrection!

AULD BRIG.

O ye, my dear-remember'd, ancient yealings, coevals
Were ye but here to share my wounded feelings!
Ye worthy proveses,[3] an' monie a bailie, provosts
Wha in the paths o' righteousness did toil aye;
Ye dainty deacons, and ye douce conveeners, worthy grave (or staid)
To whom our moderns are but causey-cleaners;
Ye godly councils wha hae blest this town;
Ye godly brethren of the sacred gown,
Wha meekly gae your hurdies to the smiters; gave thighs
And (what would now be strange) ye godly writers:[4]
A' ye douce folk I've borne aboon the broo, sober above the flood
Were ye but here, what would ye say or do?
How would your spirits groan in deep vexation,
To see each melancholy alteration;

[1] The source of the river Ayr.—R. B.

[2] A small landing place above the large quay.—R. B.

[3] The *provost* in a Scotch town is equivalent to a mayor in an English; the *bailie* to an alderman; a *deacon* is the president of an incorporated trade, the *convener* having the function of calling the meetings.

[4] This is as much as to say that the Ayr *writers* or solicitors were by no means godly in Burns's time.

And, agonizing, curse the time and place
When ye begat the base, degen'rate race!
Nae langer rev'rend men, their country's glory,
In plain braid Scots hold forth a plain braid story: broad
Nae langer thrifty citizens, an' douce, staid
Meet owre a pint, or in the council-house;
But staumrel, corky-headed, graceless gentry, half-witted
The herryment and ruin of the country; spoliation
Men, three-parts made by tailors and by barbers,
Wha waste your weel-hain'd gear on d—d new brigs and harbours!
[carefully saved wealth

NEW BRIG.

Now haud you there! for, faith, ye've said enough, hold
And muckle mair than ye can mak' to through: pass current
As for your priesthood, I shall say but little,
Corbies and clergy are a shot right kittle: crows ticklish
But under favour o' your langer beard,
Abuse o' magistrates might weel be spar'd:
To liken them to your auld-warld squad,
I must needs say, comparisons are odd.
In Ayr, wag-wits nae mair can hae a handle
To mouth "a citizen," a term o' scandal:
Nae mair the council waddles down the street,
In all the pomp of ignorant conceit;
Men wha grew wise priggin owre hops an' raisins, higgling
Or gather'd lib'ral views in bonds and seisins.
If haply Knowledge, on a random tramp,
Had shor'd them with a glimmer of his lamp, threatened
And would to Common-sense, for once betray'd them.
Plain, dull Stupidity stept kindly in to aid them.

What farther clishmaclaver might been said, palaver
What bloody wars, if Sprites had blood to shed,
No man can tell; but all before their sight,
A fairy train appear'd in order bright:
Adown the glittering stream they featly danc'd;
Bright to the moon their various dresses glanc'd:
They footed o'er the wat'ry glass so neat,
The infant ice scarce bent beneath their feet:
While arts of Minstrelsy among them rung,
And soul-ennobling bards heroic ditties sung.
O had M'Lauchlan,[1] thairm-inspiring Sage, catgut-
Been there to hear this heavenly band engage,
When thro' his dear Strathspeys they bore with Highland rage;

[1] A well-known performer of Scottish music on the violin.—R. B.——He was a Highlander who came to reside in Ayrshire, and was patronized by the Eglinton family.

Or when they struck old Scotia's melting airs,
The lover's raptur'd joys or bleeding cares;
How would his Highland lug been nobler fir'd, ear
And ev'n his matchless hand with finer touch inspir'd!
No guess could tell what instrument appear'd,
But all the soul of Music's self was heard;
Harmonious concert rung in every part,
While simple melody pour'd moving on the heart.

The Genius of the Stream in front appears,
A venerable chief advanc'd in years;
His hoary head with water-lilies crown'd,
His manly leg with garter tangle bound.
Next came the loveliest pair in all the ring,
Sweet Female Beauty hand in hand with Spring;
Then, crown'd with flow'ry hay, came rural Joy,
And Summer, with his fervid-beaming eye:
All-cheering plenty, with her flowing horn,
Led yellow Autumn wreath'd with nodding corn;
Then Winter's time-bleach'd locks did hoary show,
By Hospitality with cloudless brow.
Next follow'd Courage with his martial stride,
From where the Feal[1] wild-woody coverts hide;
Benevolence, with mild, benignant air,
A female form, came from the tow'rs of Stair:[2]
Learning and Worth in equal measures trode
From simple Catrine,[3] their long-lov'd abode:
Last, white-rob'd Peace, crown'd with a hazel wreath,
To rustic Agriculture did bequeath
The broken iron instruments of death;
At sight of whom our Sprites forgat their kindling wrath.[4]

1 "Feal is a small stream which runs near Coilsfield, then the seat of Colonel Montgomery."—GILBERT BURNS.——More commonly written *Fail*. Colonel Hugh Montgomery, latterly twelfth Earl of Eglinton, was a soldier and a patriotic landed proprietor.

2 "The poet alludes here to Mrs. Stewart of Stair. Stair was then in her possession. She removed to Afton Lodge, on the banks of the Afton, a stream which he afterwards celebrated in a song entitled 'Afton Water.'"—CURRIE.——She was among the first of the wealthier classes to take notice of Burns, some of his poems having been brought under her eye.

3 "A sweet little place on the banks of the Ayr, belonging to Professor Dugald Stewart, where he used to reside during the interval of his labours in the university (as his father had done before him), till banished from it by the erection of a cotton-mill village immediately adjoining."—GILBERT BURNS.

4 "Fergusson wrote a dialogue between the 'Causeway and the Plainstones' of Edinburgh. This probably suggested to Burns his dialogue between the Old and New Bridge over the river Ayr. The nature of such subjects requires that they shall be treated humorously, and Fergusson has attempted nothing beyond this. Though the Causeway and the Plainstones talk together, no attempt is made to personify the speakers. A cadie heard the conversation, and reported it to the poet. In the dialogue between the 'Brigs of Ayr,' Burns himself is the auditor, and the time and occasion in which it occurred are related with great circumstantiality. The poet, 'pressed by care,' or 'inspired by whim,' had left his bed in the town of Ayr, and wandered out alone in the darkness and solitude of a winter night, to the mouth of the river, where the stillness was interrupted only by the rushing sound of the conflux of the tide. It was after midnight. The Dungeon-clock had struck two, and the sound had been repeated by the Wallace Tower. All else was hushed. The moon shone brightly and

> The chilly frost, beneath the silver beam,
> Crept, gently-crusting, o'er the glittering strea

In this situation, the listening bard hears the "clanging sugh" of wings moving through the air, and speedily he perceives two beings reared the one on the Old, the other on the New bridge, whose form

A PRAYER.

LYING AT A REVEREND FRIEND'S HOUSE ONE NIGHT THE AUTHOR LEFT THE FOLLOWING VERSES IN THE ROOM WHERE HE SLEPT.[1]

O Thou dread Pow'r, who reign'st above!
I know thou wilt me hear,
When, for this scene of peace and love,
I make my pray'r sincere.

The hoary sire—the mortal stroke,
Long, long, be pleas'd to spare!
To bless his little filial flock,
And show what good men are.

She, who her lovely offspring eyes
With tender hopes and fears,
O, bless her with a mother's joys,
But spare a mother's tears!

Their hope, their stay, their darling youth,
In manhood's dawning blush;

and attire he describes, and whose conversation with each other he rehearses. These genii enter into a comparison of the respective edifices over which they preside, and afterwards, as is usual between the old and the young, compare modern characters and manners with those of past times. They differ, as may be expected, and taunt, and scold each other in broad Scotch. This conversation, which is certainly humorous, may be considered as the proper business of the poem. As the debate runs high and threatens serious consequences, all at once it is interrupted by a new scene of wonders:

A fairy train appear'd in order bright. . .

Next follow a number of other allegorical beings, among whom are the four Seasons, Rural Joy, Plenty, Hospitality, Courage, &c.

"This poem, irregular and imperfect as it is, displays various and powerful talents, and may serve to illustrate the genius of Burns. In particular it affords a striking instance of his being carried beyond his original purpose by the powers of imagination."—CURRIE.——Robert Fergusson's poem, "The Ghaists, a Kirkyard Eclogue," in which a dialogue is maintained between Watson's and Heriot's Hospitals, was also plainly in Burns's eye when composing "The Brigs of Ayr."

[1] The "reverend friend" here meant was Dr. George Lawrie, parish minister of Loudoun in Ayrshire. He was born in 1729, was ordained minister of Loudoun in 1764, and died in 1799. He was an intimate friend of Principal Robertson, Dr. Hugh Blair, Dr. James Macknight, Dr. Blacklock, and several other eminent members of the republic of letters in his own day. He married a daughter of Dr. Archibald Campbell, professor of church history, New College, St. Andrews. He had a large family, and the manse at St. Margaret's Hill was the home of one of the happiest of households. Gilbert Burns says—"The first time Robert heard the spinet played was at the house of Dr. Lawrie, minister of Loudoun. . . . Dr. Lawrie has several accomplished daughters; one of them played the spinet; the father and mother led down the dance; the rest of the sisters, the brother, the poet, and the other guests, mixed in it. It was a delightful family scene for our poet, then lately introduced to the world. His mind was roused to a poetic enthusiasm, and the stanzas were left in the room where he slept." Dr. Archibald Lawrie, son of Dr. Lawrie, and his successor as minister of Loudoun, remembered that next morning the family were waiting breakfast, as Burns had not come down. Young Mr. Lawrie was sent upstairs to see what had detained him. He met him coming down. "Well, Mr. Burns, how did you sleep last night?" "Sleep, my young friend! I have scarcely slept at all—I have been praying all night. If you go up to the room, you will find my prayers on the table." Mr. Lawrie did so, and found the above verses. Dr. Lawrie had read, and greatly admired the unpretentious Kilmarnock edition of Burns's poems, and had sent the book to his friend Dr. Blacklock, in Edinburgh, who returned an answer expressing high admiration of the poems, and suggesting that a new edition should be published in the capital. Dr. Lawrie had this letter placed in the hands of Burns through the medium of Gavin Hamilton, and it was mainly owing to Dr. Blacklock's letter that Burns was led to visit Edinburgh in the end of 1786. The effect which it produced on Burns may be read in the poet's letter to Dr. Moore (vol. ii.). See also note to next piece.

Bless him, thou God of love and truth,
Up to a parent's wish!

The beauteous, seraph sister-band,
With earnest tears I pray,
Thou know'st the snares on ev'ry hand,
Guide thou their steps alway!

When soon or late they reach that coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May they rejoice, no wand'rer lost,
A family in Heaven!

SONG—THE GLOOMY NIGHT IS GATH'RING FAST.

TUNE—"*Roslin Castle.*"

"I had for some time been skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a jail; as some ill-advised, ungrateful people had uncoupled the merciless legal pack at my heels. I had taken the last farewell of my few friends; my chest was on the road to Greenock; I had composed a song, 'The gloomy night is gathering fast,' which was to be the last effort of my muse in Caledonia, when a letter from Dr. Blacklock to a friend of mine, overthrew all my schemes, by rousing my poetic ambition." So wrote Burns in the celebrated letter to Dr. Moore (prefixed to this volume). In the Glenriddell copy of *Johnson's Museum* he wrote: "I composed this song as I convoyed my chest so far on the road to Greenock, where I was to embark in a few days for Jamaica—I meant it as a farewell dirge to my native land."[1]

The gloomy night is gath'ring fast,
Loud roars the wild inconstant blast,
Yon murky cloud is foul with rain,
I see it driving o'er the plain.
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatter'd coveys meet secure,
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

The Autumn mourns her rip'ning corn
By early Winter's ravage torn;

[1] Professor Walker gives a somewhat different account of the origin of this fine poem, the facts being communicated by the poet himself when the professor met him at Dr. Blacklock's in Edinburgh. "He had left Dr. Lawrie's family after a visit (see note to the verses immediately preceding), which he expected to be the last, and on his way home had to cross a wide stretch of solitary moor. His mind was strongly affected by parting for ever with a scene where he had tasted so much elegant and social pleasure, and depressed by the contrasted gloom of his prospects. The aspect of nature harmonized with his feelings. It was a lowering and heavy evening in the end of autumn. The wind was up and whistled through the rushes and long spear-grass which bent before it. The clouds were driving across the sky; and cold pelting showers at intervals added discomfort of body to cheerlessness of mind. Under these circumstances, and in this frame, Burns composed his poem." It remains to be added here that Professor Walker's chronology is somewhat faulty. The vessel in which Burns had taken his passage was timed to sail about the 1st September, 1786, and the letter from Dr. Blacklock was dated 4th September. Now according to Burns it was before this that the poem was composed. The song, too, was one of a set sent to Mrs. Stewart of Stair later on in that month. Instead, therefore, of "the *end* of autumn," as Walker puts it, the *beginning* seems the correct date of the composition of the song.

Across her placid, azure sky,
She sees the scowling tempest fly:
Chill runs my blood to hear it rave,—
I think upon the stormy wave,
Where many a danger I must dare,
Far from the bonnie banks of Ayr.

'Tis not the surging billow's roar,
'Tis not that fatal deadly shore;
Tho' death in ev'ry shape appear,
The wretched have no more to fear!
But round my heart the ties are bound,
That heart transpierc'd with many a wound;
These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
To leave the bonnie banks of Ayr.

Farewell, old Coila's hills and dales,
Her heathy moors and winding vales;
The scenes where wretched fancy roves,
Pursuing past, unhappy loves!
Farewell, my friends! Farewell, my foes!
My peace with these—my love with those—
The bursting tears my heart declare,
Farewell the bonnie banks of Ayr!

LINES ON MEETING LORD DAER.[1]

This wot ye all whom it concerns,
I, Rhymer Robin, alias Burns,
October twenty-third,
A ne'er-to-be forgotten day,
Sae far I sprachled up the brae, clambered slope
I dinner'd wi' a Lord.

I've been at drucken writers' feasts, drunken lawyers'
Nay, been bitch-fou 'mang godly priests, dead-drunk
Wi' rev'rence be it spoken;

[1] The meeting celebrated in this poem took place at Catrine, the seat of Professor Dugald Stewart, October 23d, 1786—and the impression made on the poet's mind by the kindness and frankness of Lord Daer, was never effaced. His lordship was eldest son to Dunbar, fourth earl of Selkirk, and had been a pupil of the professor's. Of an ardent and enterprising disposition, he entered with enthusiasm into the views of the reformers of the time. He was a member of the society of the Friends of the People, and the friend and correspondent of Lavoisier, Condorcet, and Rochefoucault. He was also a skilful and extensive agricultural improver. In the "mid-time of his days," and too soon for his country, he was cut off by consumption, Nov. 5th, 1794. Burns had been taken to Professor Stewart s house by Dr. Mackenzie of Mauchline. His natural embarrassment at being brought face to face with the famous Edinburgh literary magnate, was increased by the accidental arrival of Lord Daer. The professor, in a communication to Dr. Currie, gives a very interesting account of the poet's deportment on this trying occasion. It is quoted at p. xxxix, vol. i. of this work. In a letter to Dr. Mackenzie Burns says the verses were "really extempore, but a little corrected since."

I've even join'd the honour'd jorum,
When mighty Squireships of the quorum,
Their hydra drouth did sloken. slake

But wi' a Lord!—stand out, my shin!
A Lord—a peer[1]—an Earl's son!
Up higher yet my bonnet!
An' sic a Lord!—lang Scotch ells twa, over six feet
Our Peerage he o'erlooks them a',
As I look o'er my sonnet.

But, oh! for Hogarth's magic pow'r!
To show Sir Bardie's willyart glow'r, bewildered stare
And how he star'd and stammer'd,
When goavin', as if led wi' branks, walking stupidly bridle
An' stumpin' on his ploughman shanks,
He in the parlour hammer'd.

I sidling shelter'd in a nook,
An' at his Lordship steal't a look, stole
Like some portentous omen:
Except good-sense and social glee,
An' (what surprised me) modesty,
I markèd nought uncommon.

I watch'd the symptoms o' the great,
The gentle pride, the lordly state, pride of rank
The arrogant assuming;
The fient a pride, nae pride had he,[2] the deuce
Nor sauce, nor state that I could see,
Mair than an honest ploughman.

Then from his Lordship I shall learn,
Henceforth to meet with unconcern
One rank as weel's another;
Nae honest worthy man need care,
To meet with noble, youthful Daer,
For he but meets a brother.

SONG—THE SONS OF OLD KILLIE.[3]

TUNE—"*Shawnboy.*"

Ye sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,
To follow the noble vocation;

[1] He was not properly speaking a peer, since his father was still alive and he had no seat in the House of Lords.

[2] But though he was o' high degree,
The fient a pride, nae pride had he.
—*The Twa Dogs.*

[3] A Mr. William Parker, a Kilmarnock gentleman, was the "Willie" of the first line of this song. He was master of the Kilmarnock Kilwinning Lodge on the occasion of the poet's being made an honorary member of the lodge, 26th October, 1786. He was a banker by profession.

Your thrifty old mother has scarce such another
To sit in that honoured station.
I've little to say, but only to pray,
As praying's the ton of your fashion;
A prayer from the Muse you well may excuse,
'Tis seldom her favourite passion.

Ye powers who preside o'er the wind and the tide,
Who marked each element's border;
Who formed this frame with beneficent aim,
Whose sovereign statute is order;
Within this dear mansion, may wayward contention
Or withered Envy ne'er enter;
May secrecy round be the mystical bound.
And brotherly Love be the centre!

TAM SAMSON'S ELEGY.[1]

When this worthy old *sportsman* went out, last muirfowl season, he supposed it was to be, in Ossian's phrase, "the last of his fields," and expressed an ardent wish to die and be buried in the muirs. On this hint the author composed his elegy and epitaph.—R. B., 1787.

An honest man's the noblest work of God.—Pope.

Has auld Kilmarnock[4] seen the deil?
Or great Mackinlay[2] thrawn his heel? twisted
Or Robertson[3] again grown weel,
To preach an' read?
"Na, waur than a'!" cries ilka chiel, worse every person
"Tam Samson's dead!"

[1] Mr. Thomas Samson, one of the early friends of Burns, was a nurseryman and seedsman in Kilmarnock, much addicted to shooting, fishing, and curling, and was at the same time an enthusiastic and genial freemason. The origin of the elegy is explained by Burns himself. Mr. Samson died *in reality* on the 12th December, 1795, aged seventy-two—nearly ten years after his elegy was written. On his gravestone at the west end of the church at Kilmarnock, is inscribed, *verbatim*, the epitaph which Burns had prepared for him so long before. "It may be worth while to add, as a curious coincidence, that the remains of the Rev. Dr. Mackinlay and the Rev. John Robertson, who are mentioned with Mr. Samson in the first verse of the elegy, are buried so near to the 'weel-worn clay' of the worthy sportsman, that they all occupy one spot in the churchyard, as they do one stanza in the poem—the dust of the two former being separated from that of the latter by only a few inches of ground."—M'Kay's *History of Kilmarnock*, p. 189.

[2] A certain preacher, a great favourite with the million. *Vide* the "Ordination," stanza ii.]—R. B.

[3] Another preacher, an equal favourite with the few, who was at that time ailing. For him, see also the "Ordination," stanza ix.]—R. B. Notices of these preachers will be found in previous notes.

[4] Kilmarnock is the principal seat of population in the county of Ayr, and one of the most active and successful of the manufacturing towns of Scotland. It is connected with the history of Burns—from whose residence at Mossgiel it is about nine miles distant—by its being the place where his poems were first printed in 1786, while some of the leading men in and about the town were among the earliest of his patrons. Kilmarnock and its citizens are repeatedly mentioned or referred to in Burns's writings. Erected in 1591 into a burgh of barony, under the family of Boyd, subsequently Earls of Kilmarnock—whose residence, Dean Castle, now in ruins, is in the neighbourhood—this town was distinguished early in the seventeenth century for efforts of a humble kind in the woollen manufacture. In the days of Burns the making of blue bonnets for the peasantry, of carpets, and of boots and shoes, was practised in it to a considerable extent, which will enable the reader to comprehend the more obscure than elegant distich with which the poem of the "Ordination" commences. The town then consisted chiefly of a cluster of mean

Kilmarnock lang may grunt an' grane, groan
An' sigh, an' sab, an' greet her lane, weep alone
An' cleed her bairns, man, wife an' wean, clothe child
In mourning weed;
To Death, she's dearly paid the kane: rent in kind
Tam Samson's dead!

The brethren of the mystic level
May hing their head in woefu' bevel, hang
While by their nose the tears will revel,
Like ony bead;
Death's gien the lodge an unco devel: terrible blow
Tam Samson's dead!

When winter muffles up his cloak,
And binds the mire like a rock;
When to the loughs the curlers flock, ponds
Wi' gleesome speed,
Wha will they station at the cock? mark
Tam Samson's dead!

He was the king o' a' the core, corps
To guard, or draw, or wick[1] a bore,
Or up the rink[2] like Jehu roar
In time of need;
But now he lags on Death's hog-score:[3]
Tam Samson's dead!

Now safe the stately sawmont sail, salmon
And trouts bedropp'd wi' crimson hail,
And eels weel kend for souple tail, well known supple
And geds for greed, pikes
Since dark in Death's fish-creel we wail
Tam Samson dead!

Rejoice, ye birring paitricks a'; whirring partridges
Ye cootie moorcocks, crousely craw; feathery-legged boldly

streets and lanes, the houses of which were small, and mostly covered with thatch; the population was not much above 3000. Now, Kilmarnock is a well-built town of about 35,000 inhabitants. It still carries on the carpet manufacture, which, however, does not hold the position of a staple. It is from different branches of the engineering and machine-making trades that Kilmarnock mainly derives its present-day prominence; but its industries are very varied, comprising also woollen and other textile goods, leather, boots and shoes, fireclay goods, &c. The engineering works of the Glasgow and South-Western Railway are here, and some of the other establishments of this kind have a wide reputation. Its situation, in the midst of extensive coal-fields, is of much advantage to its industries. One of its ornaments is the Burns Memorial, which stands in the Kay Park, and comprises a museum and library, with a statue of the poet. There is a very extensive collection of Burns MSS., besides various relics of Burns. The Mackie Library kept here contains almost every published edition of his works. Kilmarnock is the chief of the Kilmarnock district of burghs, the others being Dumbarton, Port Glasgow, Renfrew, and Rutherglen.

[1] These, as well as *cock*, above, are technical terms in the game of curling. *Wick* is defined by Burns himself as "to strike a stone in an oblique direction."

[2] *Rink*, the course of the curling-stones, or the area set apart for the game on the ice.

[3] *Hog-score*, a kind of distance line, in curling, drawn across the *rink*. The game itself, which is still a great favourite in Scotland, is briefly described in a note to the "Vision."

Ye maukins, cock your fud fu' braw, hares scut finely
Withouten dread;
Your mortal fae is now awa': foe
Tam Samson's dead!

That woefu' morn be ever mourn'd,
Saw him in shootin' graith adorn'd, accoutrements
While pointers round impatient burn'd
Frae couples freed; from
But, och! he gaed and ne'er return'd! went
Tam Samson's dead!

In vain auld age his body batters;
In vain the gout his ancles fetters;
In vain the burns cam down like waters, brooks rivers
An acre braid! broad
Now ev'ry auld wife, greetin', clatters, weeping converses
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Owre mony a weary hag he limpit, bog-hole
An' aye the tither shot he thumpit, other
Till coward death behind him jumpit,
Wi' deadly feide; feud
Now he proclaims, wi' tout o' trumpet,
Tam Samson's dead.

When at his heart he felt the dagger,
He reel'd his wonted bottle-swagger,
But yet he drew the mortal trigger
Wi' weel aim'd heed;
"L—d, five!" he cried, an' owre did stagger: over
Tam Samson's dead!

Ilk hoary hunter mourn'd a brither; each
Ilk sportsman youth bemoan'd a father;
Yon auld gray stane, amang the heather,
Marks out his head,
Whare Burns has wrote, in rhyming blether, nonsense
"Tam Samson's dead!"

There low he lies, in lasting rest;
Perhaps upon his mould'ring breast
Some spitefu' moorfowl bigs her nest, builds
To hatch an' breed;
Alas! nae mair he'll them molest! no more
Tam Samson's dead!

When August winds the heather wave,
And sportsmen wander by yon grave,
Three volleys let his mem'ry crave,
O' pouther an' lead, powder

Till Echo answer frae her cave, from
"Tam Samson's dead!"

Heav'n rest his saul, whare'er he be!
Is th' wish o' mony mae than me: many more
He had twa fauts, or may be three;
Yet what remead?
Ae social, honest man want we: one
Tam Samson's dead!

THE EPITAPH.

Tam Samson's weel-worn clay here lies,
Ye canting zealots, spare him!
If honest worth in heaven rise,
Ye'll mend or ye win near him. ere get

PER CONTRA.

Go, fame, an' canter like a filly
Thro' a' the streets an' neuks o' Killie,[1]
Tell ev'ry social, honest billie fellow
To cease his grievin',
For yet, unscath'd by Death's gleg gullie, sharp knife
Tam Samson's livin'.[2]

EPISTLE TO MAJOR W. LOGAN.[3]

Hail, thairm-inspirin', rattlin' Willie! cat-gut-
Though fortune's road be rough an' hilly
To every fiddling, rhyming billie, fellow
We never heed,
But tak it like the unback'd filly,
Proud o' her speed.

When idly goavin whyles we saunter; staring aimlessly sometimes
Yirr! fancy barks, awa' we canter,
Up hill, down brae, till some mishanter, mischance
Some black bog-hole,
Arrests us, then the scathe an' banter,
We're forc'd to thole. bear

[1] *Killie* is a phrase the country-folks sometimes use for the name of a certain town in the west [Kilmarnock.]—R. B.

[2] Burns, it is said, recited the elegy to the worthy old sportsman whose name it bears. He exclaimed vigorously against being thus prematurely conveyed to the tomb. The poet, willing to gratify the veteran old sportsman, retired to the window and added the *per contra*.

[3] Major Logan was a retired military officer, who resided at Parkhouse, near Ayr, with his mother and sister, both of whom are alluded to in the last verse but one of the epistle. The major was a distinguished player on the fiddle, and also noted for his wit and humour. The poet had been a visitor at Parkhouse. The above epistle was discovered in 1828, in an old cabinet among the major's papers.

Hale be your heart! hale be your fiddle!
Lang may your elbuck jink and diddle, elbow jerk and shake
To cheer you through the weary widdle struggle
O' this wild warl',
Until you on a crummock driddle crook-headed stick walk feebly
A grey-hair'd carle.[1]

Come wealth, come poortith, late or soon, poverty
Heav'n send your heart-strings aye in tune,
And screw your temper-pins aboon, above
A fifth or mair,
The melancholious, lazy croon moan
O' cankrie care!

May still your life from day to day
Nae 'lente largo' in the play,
But 'allegretto forte' gay
Harmonious flow:
A sweeping, kindling, bauld strathspey— bold
Encore! Bravo!

A blessing on the cheery gang,
Wha dearly like a jig or sang,
An' never think o' right an' wrang
By square an' rule,
But as the clegs o' feeling stang gad-flies sting
Are wise or fool!

My hand-wal'd curse keep hard in chase hand-picked
The harpy, hoodock, purse-proud race, miserly
Wha count on poortith as disgrace— poverty
Their tuneless hearts!
May fireside discords jar a bass
To a' their parts!

But come—your hand, my careless brither—
I' th' ither warl', if there's anither— other world
An' that there is, I've little swither hesitation
About the matter,
We cheek for chow shall jog thegither, jowl together
I'se ne'er bid better. I shall ask for

We've faults and failings—granted clearly,
We're frail backsliding mortals merely,
Eve's bonnie squad, priests wyte them sheerly, blame
For our grand fa';
But still—but still—I like them dearly—
God bless them a'!

Ochon! for poor Castalian drinkers,
When they fa' foul o' earthly jinkers, deceivers

[1] This stanza is almost identical with one in the "Second Epistle to Davie, a Brother Poet."

The witching, curs'd, delicious blinkers
Hae put me hyte, — mad
And gart me weet my waukrife winkers, — made wet sleepless
Wi' girnin' spite. — grinning

But by yon moon!—and that's high swearin'—
An' every star within my hearin'!
An' by her een wha was a dear ane![1] — eyes
I'll ne'er forget;
I hope to gie the jads a clearin' — jades
In fair play yet.

My loss I mourn, but not repent it,
I'll seek my pursie whare I tint it, — lost
Ance to the Indies I were wonted,
Some cantrip hour, — witching
By some sweet elf I'll yet be dinted,
Then, *vive l'amour!*

Faites mes baisemains respectueuses,
To sentimental sister Susie,
An' honest Lucky; no to roose ye, — praise
Ye may be proud,
That sic a couple fate allows ye — such
To grace your blood.

Nae mair at present can I measure,
An', trowth, my rhymin' ware's nae treasure; — in truth
But when in Ayr, some half-hour's leisure,
Be't light, be't dark,
Sir Bard will do himsel' the pleasure
To call at Park.

ROBERT BURNS.

MOSSGIEL, *Oct. 30th*, 1786.

FRAGMENT ON SENSIBILITY.[2]

Rusticity's ungainly form
May cloud the highest mind;
But when the heart is nobly warm
The *good* excuse will find.

[1] "It is quite impossible to say if, at this time, the poet had been made acquainted with the fate of his poor *Highland Mary*, who within a few days before or after the date of this lively production, must have been laid beneath the clods in the West Churchyard at Greenock. If he forgets *her* in this interval of glee, he does not fail to remember the twa pawky een of Jean Armour, and other

—— curs'd, delicious blinkers, that put him hyte,
And gart him weet his waukrife winkers wi' girnin' spite."
—W. SCOTT DOUGLAS.

[2] It is said that on the occasion of a visit by Burns to the Rev. George Lawrie (see note to "A Prayer—O Thou dread Pow'r"), the subject of Miss Margaret Kennedy's intimacy with MacDoual of Logan had been started, and that Mrs. Lawrie, rightly regarding the

Propriety's cold, cautious rules
Warm fervour may o'erlook;
But spare poor Sensibility
Th' ungentle, harsh rebuke.

A WINTER NIGHT.

In a letter to John Ballantine inclosing this piece, and dated 20th Nov. 1786, Burns writes: "Enclosed you have my first attempt in that irregular kind of measure in which many of our finest odes are wrote. How far I have succeeded I don't know, but I shall be happy to have your opinion."

Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of the pitiless storm!
How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these?———
SHAKESPEARE.

When biting Boreas, fell and doure, — sullen
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bower;
When Phœbus gies a short-liv'd glower — glance
Far south the lift, — sky
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky shower,
Or whirling drift:[1]

Ae night the storm the steeples rocked, — one
Poor labour sweet in sleep was locked,
While burns, wi' snawy wreaths up-choked, — brooks
Wild-eddying swirl,
Or thro' the mining outlet bocked, — vomited
Down headlong hurl.[2]

List'ning the doors an' winnocks rattle, — windows
I thought me on the ourie cattle, — shivering
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle — short contest
O' winter war,
And thro' the drift, deep-lairing sprattle, — sinking scramble
Beneath a scaur. — a cliff

topic as unfit for discussion in the family circle, firmly refused to listen to the poet's remarks. On the 13th November, 1786, Burns sent a letter addressed to the eldest son of the house, accompanied by Ossian's poems and a volume of songs. On opening the latter volume, the above fragment in the bard's handwriting was discovered. Mrs. Lawrie is said to have looked on the lines as a mild expostulation for her putting a rather peremptory close to this conversation.

[1] "Who can read these lines without beholding the dun and labouring gloom with all its adjuncts before his eyes? The few circumstances exhibited are marked with a strength, and preferred with a judgment which rouse the activity of the mind, and introduce whatever association can supply."—PROFESSOR WALKER.

[2] Wide o'er the brim with many a torrent swell'd
And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread
At last the housed-up river pours along:
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes
From the rude mountain and the mossy wild
Tumbling o'er rocks abrupt and sounding far;
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads
Calm, sluggish, silent: till again constrained
Between two meeting hills it bursts away
Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;
There gathering triple force, rapid and deep
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.
—THOMSON'S *Winter*.

Ilk happing bird, wee, helpless thing, each hopping
That, in the merry months o' spring,
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee?
Whare wilt thou cower thy chittering wing, shivering
An' close thy ee?[1] eye

Ev'n you on murd'ring errants toil'd, errands
Lone from your savage homes exil'd,
The blood-stain'd roost, and sheep-cote spoil'd
My heart forgets,
While pitiless the tempest wild
Sore on you beats.

Now Phœbe, in her midnight reign,
Dark muffl'd, view'd the dreary plain;
Still crowding thoughts, a pensive train,
Rose in my soul,
When on my ear this plaintive strain,
Slow, solemn, stole:—

"Blow, blow, ye winds, with heavier gust!
And freeze, thou bitter-biting frost!
Descend, ye chilly, smothering snows!
Not all your rage, as now united, shows
More hard unkindness, unrelenting,
Vengeful malice unrepenting,
Than heav'n-illumin'd man on brother man bestows!

See stern Oppression's iron gripe,
Or mad Ambition's gory hand,
Sending, like blood-hounds from the slip,
Woe, want, and murder o'er a land!
Ev'n in the peaceful rural vale,
Truth, weeping, tells the mournful tale,
How pamper'd Luxury, Flatt'ry by her side,
The parasite empoisoning her ear,
With all the servile wretches in the rear,
Looks o'er proud property, extended wide;
And eyes the simple rustic hind,
Whose toil upholds the glittering show,
A creature of another kind,
Some coarser substance unrefin'd,
Plac'd for her lordly use thus far, thus vile below.

[1] "Not man only, but all that environs man in the material and moral universe, is lovely in his sight: 'the hoary hawthorn,' the 'troop of gray plover,' the 'solitary curlew, all are dear to him; all live in this Earth along with him, and to all he is knit as in mysterious brotherhood. How touching is it, for instance, that, amidst the gloom of personal misery, brooding over the wintry desolation without him and within him, he thinks of the 'ourie cattle,' and 'silly sheep,' and their sufferings in the pitiless storm. . . . The tenant of the mean hut, with its 'ragged roof and chinky wall,' has a heart to pity even these! This is worth several homilies on Mercy: for it is the voice of Mercy herself."—THOMAS CARLYLE.

Where, where is Love's fond, tender throe,
With lordly Honour's lofty brow,
The powers you proudly own?
Is there, beneath Love's noble name,
Can harbour, dark, the selfish aim,
To bless himself alone?
Mark maiden-innocence a prey
To love-pretending snares,
This boasted Honour turns away,
Shunning soft pity's rising sway,
Regardless of the tears, and unavailing pray'rs!
Perhaps, this hour, in mis'ry's squalid nest,
She strains your infant to her joyless breast,
And with a mother's fears shrinks at the rocking blast!

"Oh ye! who sunk in beds of down,
Feel not a want but what yourselves create,
Think, for a moment, on his wretched fate,
Whom friends and fortune quite disown!
Ill-satisfy'd keen nature's clam'rous call,
Stretch'd on his straw he lays himself to sleep,
While thro' the ragged roof and chinky wall,
Chill o'er his slumbers piles the drifty heap;
Think on the dungeon's grim confine,
Where guilt and poor misfortune pine!
Guilt, erring man, relenting view!
But shall thy legal rage pursue
The wretch, already crushèd low
By cruel fortune's undeserved blow?
Affliction's sons are brothers in distress,
A brother to relieve, how exquisite the bliss!"

I heard nae mair, for Chanticleer
Shook off the pouthery snaw, powdery
And hail'd the morning with a cheer,
A cottage-rousing craw.

But deep this truth impress'd my mind—
Thro' all his works abroad,
The heart, benevolent and kind,
The most resembles God.[1]

[1] "The 'Winter Night,' like the 'Brigs,' sets out with description very powerfully executed, and in language decidedly Scotch, but it passes abruptly to English, and in my apprehension, to a tone more nearly within the compass of an ordinary poet. . . . It has always appeared to me that we might conceive the two different portions of this poem to be the work of different authors, or of the same author at hours when the tide of inspiration had risen to very unequal heights. Other writers are no doubt liable to similar inequalities; but in Burns they were greater, from the superior vehemence and proportional remission of feeling, under the pressure of which he was urged to composition. When a subject ceased to interest him strongly, it was abandoned for a new one which possessed this power; and when he did not write with all the *vivida vis animi*, he was apt to let the vigour of his conceptions relax with the vivacity of his emotions."—PROFESSOR WALKER.

SONG—YON WILD MOSSY MOUNTAINS.[1]

TUNE—"*Yon wild mossy mountains.*"

"This tune," says Burns, "is Oswald's. [It appears under the name of "Phebe" in Oswald's fourth volume.] "The song alludes to a part of my private history, which is of no consequence to the world to know."

Yon wild mossy mountains sae lofty and wide, so
That nurse in their bosom the youth o' the Clyde,
Where the grouse lead their coveys thro' the heather to feed,
And the shepherd tents his flock as he pipes on his reed. tends

Not Gowrie's rich valley, nor Forth's sunny shores,
To me hae the charms o' yon wild mossy moors; have
For there, by a lanely, sequester'd clear stream, lonely
Resides a sweet lassie, my thought and my dream.

Amang thae wild mountains shall still be my path, those
Ilk stream foaming down its ain green, narrow strath; every valley
For there, wi' my lassie, the day lang I rove,
While o'er us unheeded fly the swift hours o' love.

She is not the fairest, altho' she is fair;
O' nice education but sma' is her share:
Her parentage humble as humble can be;
But I lo'e the dear lassie because she lo'es me.

To beauty what man but maun yield him a prize, must
In her armour of glances, and blushes, and sighs?
And when wit and refinement hae polished her darts,
They dazzle our een, as they flee to our hearts. eyes

But kindness, sweet kindness, in the fond sparkling ee, eye
Has lustre outshining the diamond to me;
And the heart-beating love, as I'm clasp'd in her arms,
O, these are my lassie's all-conquering charms!

ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

This beautiful address was composed on the poet's first visit to Edinburgh, and must have been written shortly after his arrival, as it is alluded to in a letter (dated Decr. 27, 1786) to William Chalmers within a month after that event.

Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and towers,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign powers!

[1] Stenhouse leads us to infer that Highland Mary is the theme of the song; but it has been suggested by Allan Cunningham that the heroine is probably "Nannie." From the locality assigned to the subject of the song (the upland region where the Clyde has its early course), and the mystery of the note, we are inclined to think that the heroine was a different personage altogether from any whom he has elsewhere celebrated. It is really, however, "of no consequence to the world to know."

From marking wildly-scatter'd flowers,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours,
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

Here Wealth slow swells the golden tide,
As busy Trade his labours plies;
There Architecture's noble pride
Bids elegance and splendour rise;
Here Justice, from her native skies,
High wields her balance and her rod;
There Learning, with his eagle eyes,
Seeks Science in her coy abode.

Thy sons, Edina! social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail;
Their views enlarg'd, their lib'ral mind,
Above the narrow, rural vale;
Attentive still to Sorrow's wail,
Or modest Merit's silent claim;
And never may their sources fail!
And never envy blot their name!

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn!
Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptur'd thrill of joy!
Fair Burnett[1] strikes th' adoring eye,
Heav'n's beauties on my fancy shine,
I see the Sire of Love on high,
And own His work indeed divine!

There, watching high the least alarms,
Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar;
Like some bold veteran, gray in arms,
And mark'd with many a seamy scar:
The pond'rous wall and massy bar,
Grim-rising o'er the rugged rock;
Have oft withstood assailing war,
And oft repell'd the invader's shock.

With awe-struck thought, and pitying tears,
I view that noble, stately dome,[2]

[1] Allusion is here made to Elizabeth Burnett, daughter of Lord Monboddo, a young lady of surpassing beauty, who at this time formed the charm and ornament of Edinburgh society. Mrs. Alison Cockburn, authoress of "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," and who died in 1794, wrote about the time this address was composed:—"The town is at present all agog with the 'Ploughman Poet,' who receives adulation with native dignity, and is the very figure of his profession, strong, but coarse; yet he has a most enthusiastic heart of love. He has seen Duchess Gordon and all the gay world. His favourite, for looks and manners, is Bess Burnett—no bad judge, indeed!" We shall have occasion to speak farther of her when we come to the elegy which the poet wrote on her death, in 1790.

[2] This refers to Holyrood Palace, *dome* being here used (as by Pope) in the general sense of edifice.

"Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar."

—ADDRESS TO EDINBURGH.

"Thy rough, rude fortress gleams afar"

Where Scotia's kings of other years,
Fam'd heroes! had their royal home:
Alas! how chang'd the times to come!
Their royal name low in the dust!
Their hapless race wild-wand'ring roam,
Tho' rigid law cries out, 'twas just!

Wild beats my heart to trace your steps,
Whose ancestors, in days of yore,
Thro' hostile ranks and ruin'd gaps
Old Scotia's bloody lion bore:
Ev'n I who sing in rustic lore,
Haply my sires have left their shed,
And fac'd grim danger's loudest roar,
Bold-following where your fathers led!

Edina! Scotia's darling seat!
All hail thy palaces and tow'rs,
Where once beneath a monarch's feet
Sat Legislation's sov'reign pow'rs!
From marking wildly-scatter'd flow'rs,
As on the banks of Ayr I stray'd,
And singing, lone, the ling'ring hours
I shelter in thy honour'd shade.

TO A HAGGIS.[1]

Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,	befall	comely
Great chieftain o' the puddin'-race!		
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,	above	
Painch, tripe, or thairm:	paunch	small intestine
Weel are ye wordy of a grace	worthy	
As lang's my arm.		

[1] A haggis is a pudding, supposed to be peculiar to Scotland, composed of the minced heart, liver, &c., of a sheep, mixed with oatmeal and suet, seasoned with salt, pepper, &c., and boiled in the carefully cleaned stomach of the animal. The poet's description of this phenomenon in cookery is faithful as it is graphic. Its appearance is very apt to startle an Englishman, however bold he may be as a trencher-man: but by a Scotsman, who knows its intrinsic worth, and honours the country to which it belongs, it is always welcomed at table with hearty applause. Formerly, in Burns's time, and before it, when the style of living in Scotland was simpler and humbler than it now is, the Haggis was one of the principal luxuries of the farmer and labouring man, and the poet's description of the enthusiasm with which it was devoured is not overcharged. At the present day, however, it forms a much less prominent figure in rustic dietetics, though it has still its patrons in town as well as in country. There are different accounts as to the composition of the poem, but it first appeared in the *Caledonian Mercury* on the 20th December, 1786, subsequently in the *Scots Magazine* for January, 1787, and was reprinted in that year's edition of the poet's works. The concluding verse originally stood thus:—

> Ye powers, wha gie us a' that's gude,
> Still bless auld Caledonia's brood,
> Wi' great John Barleycorn's heart's-blude
> In stoups or luggies,
> And on our board, that king o' food,
> A glorious Haggis!

Burns, it is said, repeated something like this when asked to say grace at a table where a haggis formed a prominent part of the entertainment, and so well was his extemporaneous address received, that he was induced to extend it as above.

The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill, thighs
Your pin[1] wad help to mend a mill would
In time o' need,
While thro' your pores the dews distil
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic labour dight, wipe
An' cut you up with ready slight, skill
Trenching your gushing entrails bright
Like ony ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin', rich!

Then horn[2] for horn they stretch an' strive,
Deil tak the hindmost, on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swall'd kytes belyve swelled bellies by and by
Are bent like drums;
Then auld guidman, 'maist like to ryve, paterfamilias burst
'Bethankit' hums. the grace

Is there that o'er his French ragout,
Or olio that wad staw a sow, would surfeit
Or fricassee wad mak her spew
Wi' perfect scunner, disgust
Looks down wi' sneerin', scornfu' view
On sic a dinner? such

Poor devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rash, pithless rush
His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
His nieve a nit; fist nut
Thro' bloody flood or field to dash,
O how unfit!

But mark the rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve a blade, mighty fist
He'll mak it whistle;
An' legs, an' arms, an' heads will sned, lop
Like taps o' thrissle. thistle

Ye pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill o' fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware watery stuff
That jaups in luggies;[3] splashes wooden dishes
But, if ye wish her gratefu' pray'r,
Gie her a Haggis!

[1] A wooden skewer by means of which the opening in the bag is firmly closed up.

[2] The spoons formerly used at the tables of the farmers and farm-labourers, and others in a similar station of life, were made of horn; and indeed such spoons may be met with yet.

[3] Wooden dishes resembling small tubs, being made of staves and hoops with ear-shaped handles.

TO MISS LOGAN,[1]

WITH BEATTIE'S POEMS AS A NEW YEAR'S GIFT, JANUARY 1, 1787.

Again the silent wheels of time
Their annual round have driven,
And you, tho' scarce in maiden prime,
Are so much nearer Heaven.

No gifts have I from Indian coasts
The infant year to hail;
I send you more than India boasts,
In Edwin's simple tale.

Our sex with guile and faithless love
Is charg'd, perhaps, too true;
But may, dear maid, each lover prove
An Edwin still to you!

EXTEMPORE IN THE COURT OF SESSION.[2]

TUNE—"*Killiecrankie.*"

THE LORD ADVOCATE.

He clench'd his pamphlets in his fist,
He quoted and he hinted,
Till in a declamation-mist,
His argument he tint it: lost
He gapèd for't, he grapèd for't, groped
He fand it was awa, man; found
But what his common sense came short,
He ekèd out wi' law, man.

MR. ERSKINE.

Collected, Harry stood a wee, a short time
Then open'd out his arm, man;
His lordship sat wi' ruefu' ee, eye
And ey'd the gathering storm, man:
Like wind-driv'n hail it did assail,
Or torrents owre a linn, man; over a rock
The Bench sae wise lift up their eyes,
Half-wauken'd wi' the din, man.

[1] Miss Logan was the "sentimental sister Susie," of Major Logan, to whom the epistle in a preceding page is addressed.

[2] Mr. Ilay Campbell, afterwards Lord President, was then Lord Advocate. Mr. Erskine (Harry Erskine) was Dean of Faculty.

ON WILLIAM SMELLIE.[1]

AUTHOR OF "THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATURAL HISTORY."

Shrewd Willie Smellie[2] to Crochallan came,
The old cock'd hat, the gray surtout, the same;
His bristling beard just rising in its might,
'Twas four long nights and days to shaving-night—
His uncombed grizzly locks wild scaring, thatch'd
A head for thought profound and clear unmatch'd;
Yet tho' his caustic wit was biting, rude,
His heart was warm, benevolent, and good.

INSCRIPTION ON THE TOMBSTONE OF FERGUSSON.

HERE LIES ROBERT FERGUSSON, POET,

BORN, SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1751. DIED, 16TH OCTOBER, 1774

No sculptur'd marble here, nor pompous lay,
"No storied urn nor animated bust,"[3]
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way
To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust.

ADDITIONAL STANZAS.[4]

She mourns, sweet tuneful youth, thy hapless fate.
Tho' all the powers of song thy fancy fir'd,
Yet Luxury and Wealth lay by in state,
And thankless starv'd what they so much admir'd.

This humble tribute with a tear he gives,
A brother Bard, he can no more bestow:
But dear to fame thy Song immortal lives,
A nobler monument than Art can show.

[1] This, with some trifling variations, was introduced into an uncompleted poem "The Poet's Progress."

[2] William Smellie was one of the printer Creech's partners at the time of Burns's residence in Edinburgh. He was born in 1740 and originally bred a printer, and his sterling integrity and habits of invincible application raised him to a distinguished rank in his profession, and in the republic of letters. To give some idea of his perseverance, it may be mentioned that he studied Hebrew, in order to qualify himself to correct the proof-sheets of a grammar of that language which was about to be printed by his employers! Smellie died in June, 1795. The "Crochallan Fencibles," alluded to in the first line, was a club of literary wits which met weekly in a tavern in Edinburgh. They assumed the name from the burden of a Gaelic song which the landlord used to sing. Smellie was a fellow of the Royal Society, and secretary to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. He translated Buffon's *Natural History* into English, and planned, compiled, and superintended the first edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1771, 3 vols.).

[3] Gray's "Elegy."

[4] The two additional stanzas were first published in the Globe edition of *Burns's Works* (Macmillan & Co.), edited by Alexander Smith. They appear in the Edinburgh Common-place Book.——On the 6th February, 1787, Burns petitioned the Managers of the Kirk and Kirkyard Funds of the Parish of Canongate as follows: "To the honourable Bailies of Canongate, Edinburgh.—Gentlemen, I am sorry to be told that the remains of Robert Fergusson, the so justly celebrated poet, a man whose talents for ages to come will do honour to our Caledonian name, lie in your churchyard among the ignoble dead, unnoticed and unknown. Some memorial to direct the steps of

VERSES

WRITTEN ON THE PORTRAIT FRONTISPIECE IN A COPY OF ROBERT FERGUSSON'S WORKS PRESENTED TO A YOUNG LADY, MARCH 19, 1787.[1]

Curse on ungrateful man, that can be pleas'd,
And yet can starve the author of the pleasure!
O thou my elder brother in misfortune,
By far my elder brother in the muse,
With tears I pity thy unhappy fate!
Why is the bard unfitted for the world,
Yet has so keen a relish of its pleasures?

TO MRS. SCOTT OF WAUCHOPE.

GUIDWIFE,

I mind it weel, in early date,	remember	
When I was beardless, young, and blate,	bashful	
An' first could thrash the barn;		
Or haud a yokin' at the pleugh,	hold	
An' tho' forfoughten sair eneugh,	exhausted	
Yet unco proud to learn;	extremely	
When first amang the yellow corn		
A man I reckon'd was,		
An' wi' the lave ilk merry morn	rest every	
Could rank my rig and lass,	ridge	
Still shearing, and clearing		
The tither stookèd raw,	row	
Wi' claivers, an' haivers,	idle talk	nonsense
Wearing the day awa,—		

the lovers of Scottish song when they wish to shed a tear over the 'narrow house' of the bard who is no more is surely a tribute due to Fergusson's memory—a tribute I wish to have the honour of paying. I petition you then, gentlemen, to permit me to lay a simple stone over his revered ashes, to remain an unalienable property to his deathless fame." On the 22d of February at a meeting of the managers the petition was read and unanimously granted, and on the reverse side of the stone the following words were engraved: "By special grant of the managers to Robert Burns, who erected this stone, this burial-place is to remain for ever sacred to the memory of Robert Fergusson." Referring to this last clause Chambers remarks, "If this order of the managers was designed to set aside the ground from all future use as a part of the general place of sepulture, I am sorry to remark that it has been, through inadvertence in some quarter, violated, as I was present some years ago, when the remains of Mr. John Inverarity, a nephew of Fergusson, were deposited in the grave of the poet."

[1] This was written immediately after the poet had obtained permission from the Managers of the Kirk and Kirkyard Funds of Canongate "to erect a head-stone at the grave of Fergusson." The "curse" had been previously more forcibly and pointedly launched in the epistle to William Simson.

My curse upon your whunstane hearts,
Ye E'nbrugh gentry!
The tythe o' what ye waste at cartes,
Wad stow'd his pantry!

Lord Rosebery, who now owns the volume, allowed a facsimile of the frontispiece to be made for "The Centenary Burns" (Messrs. Henley and Henderson).

E'en then a wish—I mind its power— remember
A wish, that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan, or book could make,
Or sing a sang at least.[1]
The rough burr-thistle, spreading wide
Amang the bearded bear, barley
I turn'd the weeder-clips aside,
An' spar'd the symbol dear;[2]
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise,
A Scot still, but blot still, without
I knew nae higher praise.

But still the elements o' sang
In formless jumble, right an' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain:
Till on that har'st I said before, harvest
My partner in the merry corps,
She rous'd the forming strain:
I see her yet, the sonsie quean, comely lass
That lighted up my jingle,
Her witching smile, her pauky een roguish eyes
That gart my heart-strings tingle; made
I firèd, inspirèd,
At ev'ry kindling keek, stolen glance
But bashing, and dashing, bashful and easily dashed
I fearèd aye to speak.[3]

Health to the sex! ilk guid chiel says, every good fellow
Wi' merry dance in winter-days,
An' we to share in common:
The gust o' joy, the balm of woe, relish
The saul o' life, the heav'n below,
Is rapture-giving woman.
Ye surly sumphs, who hate the name, dolts
Be mindfu' o' your mither:

[1] The reader will notice that this long sentence is incomplete, a verb, or expression containing a verb, being wanted to give full sense.

[2] "He is hardly to be envied who can contemplate without emotion this exquisite picture of young nature and young genius. It was amidst such scenes that this extraordinary being felt those first indefinite stirrings of immortal ambition, which he has himself shadowed out under the magnificent image of the 'blind gropings of Homer's Cyclops around the walls of his cave.'"—J. G. LOCKHART.

[3] "You know our country custom of coupling a man and woman together as partners in the labours of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn my partner was a bewitching creature, who just counted an autumn less. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language, but you know the Scottish idiom—she was a *bonnie, sweet, sonsie lass*. . . . In short, she, altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me into a certain delicious passion. . . . How she caught the contagion I can't say, . . . but I never expressly told her that I loved her."—BURNS'S *Autobiographical Letter to Dr. Moore*.——The girl's name was Nellie Kilpatrick; she was the heroine of the song "Handsome Nell,' the first known composition of the poet.

She, honest woman, may think shame
That ye're connected with her.
Ye're wae men, ye're nae men, poor
That slight the lovely dears;
To shame ye, disclaim ye,
Ilk honest birkie swears. each gallant

For you, no bred to barn and byre, cow-house
Wha sweetly tune the Scottish lyre,
Thanks to you for your line.
The marled plaid ye kindly spare, checkered (or mottled)
By me should gratefully be ware; worn
'Twad please me to the nine.
I'd be mair vauntie o' my hap, proud wrap
Douce hingin' o'er my curple, modestly crupper
Than ony ermine ever lap, leaped
Or proud imperial purple.
Fareweel then, lang heal then, health
An' plenty be your fa': lot
May losses and crosses
Ne'er at your hallan ca'.[1] door

ROBERT BURNS.

[1] Mrs. Scott of Wauchope, near Jedburgh, in Roxburghshire, a painter and a poetess, addressed a rhyming epistle to Burns, entitled, "The Guidwife of Wauchope-house to Robert Burns," expressing her admiration of his poems, and her doubts as to the correctness of the report, that they were the production of a ploughman. But it may be as well to let her tell her own tale, and thus afford a specimen of her poetic powers:—

My canty, witty, rhyming ploughman, good-humoured
I hafflins doubt it is na true, man, half
That ye between the stilts were bred, plough-shafts
Wi' ploughmen school'd, wi' ploughmen fed.
I doubt it sair, ye've drawn your knowledge greatly
Either frae grammar-school or college.
Guid troth, your saul and body baith
War better fed, I'd gie my aith, oath
Than theirs, who sup sour-milk and parritch,
An' bummil thro' the Single Carritch. bungle Shorter Catechism
Wha ever heard the ploughman speak,
Could tell gif Homer was a Greek?
He'd flee as soon upon a cudgel,
As get a single line of Virgil.
An' then sae slee ye crack your jokes sly
O' Willie Pitt, and Charlie Fox,
Our great men a' sae weel descrive, describe
An' how to gar the nation thrive, make
Ane maist wad swear ye dwalt amang them,
An' as ye saw them, sae ye sang them.
But be ye ploughman, be ye peer,
Ye are a funny blade, I swear;
An' though the cauld I ill can bide,
Yet twenty miles, an' mair, I'd ride,
O'er moss, an' muir, an' never grumble,
Tho' my auld yad shou'd gie a stumble, jade
To crack a winter-night wi' thee, chat
And hear thy sangs and sonnets slee.
A guid saut herring, an' a cake,
Wi' sic a chiel, a feast wad make; fellow
I'd rather scour your reaming yill, creaming ale
Or eat o' cheese and bread my fill,
Than wi' dull lairds on turtle dine,
An' ferlie at their wit and wine. wonder
O, gif I kenn'd but whare ye baide, resided
I'd send to you a marled plaid; checkered
'Twad haud your shoulders warm and braw,
An' douce at kirk or market shaw. respectable
For south, as weel as north, my lad,
A' honest Scotchmen lo'e the *maud*, shepherd's plaid
Right wae that we're sae far frae ither:
Yet proud I am to ca' ye brither.

Burns immediately answered her epistle by addressing to her the above poem. In his Border tour he visited Wauchope: regarding its inmates we find the following entry in his journal—"Wauchope—Mr. Scott exactly the figure and face commonly given to Sancho Panza—very shrewd in his farming matters, and not unfrequently stumbles on what may be called a strong thing rather than a good thing. Mrs. Scott all the sense, taste, intrepidity of face and bold critical decision, which usually distinguish female authors." Of a certain Mrs. Fall, also encountered on his Border tour, he remarks—"Fully more clever in the fine arts and sciences than my friend Lady Wauchope, without her consummate assurance of her own abilities." Mrs. Scott's maiden name was Elizabeth Rutherford, and she was niece to Mrs. Cockburn (quoted in reference to Burns on p. 64 above), authoress of the favourite song, "I've seen the smiling of Fortune beguiling," otherwise known as the "Flowers of the Forest."

PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. WOODS ON HIS BENEFIT NIGHT,[1] MONDAY, APRIL 16TH, 1787.

When by a generous Public's kind acclaim,
That dearest need is granted—honest fame:
When here your favour is the actor's lot,
Nor even the man in private life forgot;
What breast so dead to heav'nly virtue's glow,
But heaves impassion'd with the grateful throe?

Poor is the task to please a barb'rous throng,
It needs no Siddons' powers in Southern's song;
But here an ancient nation fam'd afar,
For genius, learning high, as great in war—
Hail! Caledonia! name for ever dear,
Before whose sons I'm honour'd to appear!
Where every science—every nobler art—
That can inform the mind, or mend the heart,
Is known; as grateful nations oft have found,
Far as the rude barbarian marks the bound.
Philosophy,[2] no idle, pedant dream,
Here holds her search by heaven-taught Reason's beam;
Here History[3] paints with elegance and force,
The tide of Empire's fluctuating course;
Here Douglas[4] forms wild Shakespeare into plan,
And Harley[5] rouses all the God in man.
When well-form'd taste, and sparkling wit, unite
With manly lore, or female beauty bright,
(Beauty, where faultless symmetry and grace,
Can only charm us in the second place,)
Witness my heart, how oft with panting fear,
As on this night, I've met these judges here!
But still the hope Experience taught to live,
Equal to judge—you're candid to forgive.
No hundred-headed Riot here we meet,
With Decency and Law beneath his feet;
Nor Insolence assumes fair Freedom's name;
Like Caledonians, you applaud or blame.

O Thou, dread Power! whose empire-giving hand
Has oft been stretch'd to shield the honour'd land!

[1] Mr. Woods was known to Fergusson the poet, as well as to Burns. He was long a popular actor in Edinburgh, and was styled the *Scottish Roscius*. He was born in 1751, retired from the stage in April, 1802, and died in December of the same year.

[2] Thomas Reid at Glasgow, and Dugald Stewart at Edinburgh.

[3] The historians Hume and Robertson.

[4] Home's tragedy of *Douglas*. — "In April in course of a prologue for the benefit of the veteran Scotch Roscius (Mr. Woods) Burns, after referring to Hume, Robertson, and Reid, as glories of Caledonia, perpetrated his worst criticism—

Here Douglas forms wild Shakespeare into plan."

—PROFESSOR NICHOL.

[5] Henry Mackenzie in *The Man of Feeling*.

Strong may she glow with all her ancient fire!
May every son be worthy of his sire!
Firm may she rise with generous disdain
At Tyranny's, or direr Pleasure's chain!
Still Self-dependent in her native shore,
Bold may she brave grim Danger's loudest roar,
Till Fate the curtain drop on worlds to be no more.

VERSES

INTENDED TO BE WRITTEN BENEATH A NOBLE EARL'S PICTURE.[1]

Whose is that noble, dauntless brow?
And whose that eye of fire?
And whose that generous princely mien
E'en rooted foes admire?

Stranger! to justly show that brow,
And mark that eye of fire,
Would take His hand whose vernal tints
His other works admire.

Bright as a cloudless summer sun
With stately port he moves;
His guardian Seraph eyes with awe
The noble Ward he loves.

Among the illustrious Scottish sons
That Chief thou mayst discern;
Mark Scotia's fond returning eye,
It dwells upon Glencairn.

SONG—MY LADY'S GOWN THERE'S GAIRS UPON'T.[2]

TUNE—"*Gregg's Pipes.*"

My lady's gown there's gairs upon't, inserted pieces
And gowden flowers sae rare upon't; golden

[1] The "noble earl" is the Earl of Glencairn, one of the poet's most serviceable patrons. (See note to the "Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn.", The above verses are more inspired by gratitude than by the Muse. The earl refused the poet's request for liberty to print them, and they first appeared in Cunningham's edition of 1839. Cunningham suggests that the word "admire" closing the second stanza is a slip of the pen for "inspire"; but this alteration would be no great improvement on the text.

[2] "This song," says Stenhouse, "was written for the *Museum* in 1788. . . . Johnson long hesitated to admit it, . . . but being blamed for such fastidiousness he at length gave it a place." It appears in the sixth volume, adapted to a reel tune composed by James Gregg, a dancing master and musical composer of some local eminence in his day in Ayrshire, who died at a good old age in 1817.——The stanza which serves as a chorus seems older than Burns's time; perhaps the whole is after an old model.

But Jenny's jimps and jirkinet, stays bodice
My lord thinks meikle mair upon't.

My lord a-hunting he is gane,
But hounds or hawks wi' him are nane,
By Colin's cottage lies his game,
If Colin's Jenny be at hame.
My lady's gown, &c.

My lady 's white, my lady 's red,
And kith and kin o' Cassillis' blude,
But her ten-pund lands o' tocher guid, dower
Were a' the charms his lordship lo'ed.
My lady's gown, &c.

Out o'er yon moor, out o'er yon moss,
Whare gor-cocks thro' the heather pass, grouse
There wons auld Colin's bonnie lass, dwells
A lily in a wilderness!
My lady's gown, &c.

Sae sweetly move her genty limbs, elegant
Like music-notes o' lovers' hymns:
The diamond dew in her een sae blue, eyes
Where laughing love sae wanton swims.
My lady's gown, &c.

My lady 's dink, my lady 's drest, neat
The flower and fancy o' the west;
But the lassie that a man lo'es best,
O, that's the lass to make him blest.
My lady's gown, &c.

HUNTING SONG—THE BONNIE MOOR-HEN.[1]

TUNE—"*I rede you beware at the hunting.*"

The heather was blooming, the meadows were mawn,
Our lads gaed a-hunting ae day at the dawn, went one
O'er moors and o'er mosses, and mony a glen,
At length they discover'd a bonnie moor-hen.

I rede ye beware at the hunting, young men; warn
I rede ye beware at the hunting, young men;
Tak some on the wing, and some as they spring,
But cannily steal on a bonnie moor-hen. quietly

[1] The date of this song is uncertain. Burns sent a copy of it early in 1788 to Clarinda, who expresses her opinion of it in a letter of 6th February, thus: "Do not publish the 'Moor-hen;' do not, for your sake and for mine." It was found among the loose MSS. handed by Mrs. Burns to Cromek.

Sweet brushing the dew from the brown heather bells,
Her colours betray'd her on yon mossy fells;
Her plumage outlustr'd the pride o' the spring,
And O! as she wanton'd sae gay on the wing.
I rede ye, &c.

Auld Phœbus himsel', as he peep'd o'er the hill,
In spite, at her plumage, he trièd his skill;
He levell'd his rays where she bask'd on the brae— slope
His rays were outshone, and but mark'd where she lay.
I rede ye, &c.

They hunted the valley, they hunted the hill,
The best o' our lads, wi' the best o' our skill;
But still as the fairest she sat in their sight,
Then, whirr! she was over a mile at a flight.
I rede ye, &c.

EPIGRAM ON AN ARTIST.[1]

Dear ——, I'll gie ye some advice,
You'll tak it no uncivil:
You shouldna paint at angels mair,
But try and paint the devil.
To paint an angel's kittle wark, ticklish
Wi' Nick there's little danger:
You'll easy draw a lang-kent face,
But no sae weel a *stranger*.

VERSES

ADDRESSED TO THE LANDLADY OF THE INN AT ROSSLYN.[2]

My blessings on you, sonsy wife; comely
I ne'er was here before;
You've gi'en us walth for horn and knife, plenty spoon
Nae heart could wish for more.

Heav'n keep you free frae care and strife,
Till far ayont fourscore; beyond
And while I toddle on through life,
I'll ne'er gang by your door.

[1] According to Robert Chambers, Burns was on one occasion introduced to a celebrated Edinburgh artist in his studio; the painter was at the time engaged on a picture, the subject of which was Jacob's Dream. After a minute inspection of the painting the poet wrote the above lines on the back of a little sketch which is still preserved in the painter's family. Chambers refrains from satisfying our curiosity as to the name of the artist.

[2] Where Burns is said, after a walk to the Pentland Hills, with Alexander Nasmyth, portrait-painter, to have breakfasted so much to his satisfaction that he presented his hostess with these lines, scratched on the back of a wooden platter.

EPIGRAM ON ELPHINSTONE'S TRANSLATION

OF MARTIAL'S EPIGRAMS.

To Clarinda in 1787 Burns wrote:—"Did I ever repeat to you an epigram I made on a Mr. Elphinstone, who has given a translation of Martial, a famous Latin poet? The poetry of Elphinstone can only equal his prose-notes. I was sitting in a merchant's shop of my acquaintance, waiting for somebody: he put Elphinstone into my hand, and asked my opinion of it: I begged leave to write it on a blank leaf, which I did."

O thou whom Poetry abhors,
Whom Prose has turnèd out of doors,
Heard'st thou that groan—proceed no further,
'Twas laurell'd Martial roaring murther.

EPIGRAM—THE BOOKWORMS.[1]

Through and through the inspirèd leaves,
Ye maggots, make your windings;
But, Oh! respect his lordship's taste,
And spare his golden bindings.

EPIGRAM ON MISS BURNS.[2]

Cease, ye prudes, your envious railing;
Lovely Burns has charms—confess!
True it is, she has one failing—
Had a woman ever less?

EPITAPH ON THE SCHOOLMASTER OF CLEISH PARISH,

FIFESHIRE.[3]

Here lie Willie Michie's banes,
O Satan! when ye tak him,
Gie him the schoolin' o' your weans; children
For clever Deils he'll mak them!

[1] Burns, it is said, calling one day on a nobleman, was shown into the library. Being kept waiting, he had time to inspect his lordship's collection. Among the rest was a splendidly-bound copy of Shakspeare, little used and much worm-eaten. Burns rashly wrote on the blank leaf of one of the volumes the above epigram, which was found long after the poet's death, by some one accidentally attracted, perhaps, to the same neglected volume.

[2] Miss Burns was a well-known frail one in Edinburgh during the poet's residence there. She was noted for her beauty. She successfully appealed to the Court of Session against a sentence of banishment pronounced by Creech as one of the magistrates.

[3] Burns probably crossed the Forth occasionally during his first stay in Edinburgh, and may have met and admired the Cleish schoolmaster whose cleverness he here celebrates.

POETICAL ADDRESS TO MR. WILLIAM TYTLER,[1]

AUTHOR OF "AN INQUIRY, HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL, INTO THE EVIDENCE AGAINST MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS."
WITH A PRESENT OF THE BARD'S PICTURE.

Reverèd defender of beauteous Stuart,
Of Stuart, a name once respected,
A name, which to love was the mark of a true heart,
But now 'tis despised and neglected.

Tho' something like moisture conglobes in my eye,[2]
Let no one misdeem me disloyal;
A poor friendless wand'rer may well claim a sigh,
Still more, if that wand'rer were royal.

My fathers that name have rever'd on a throne;
My fathers have fallen to right it;
Those fathers would spurn their degenerate son,
That name should he scoffingly slight it.[3]

Still in prayers for King George I most heartily join,
The Queen, and the rest of the gentry;
Be they wise, be they foolish, is nothing of mine;
Their title's avow'd by my country.

But why of that epocha make such a fuss,
That gave us the Hanover stem;
If bringing them over was lucky for us,
I'm sure 'twas as lucky for them![4]

But, loyalty, truce! we're on dangerous ground,
Who knows how the fashions may alter?
The doctrine, to-day, that is loyalty sound,
To-morrow may bring us a halter.

[1] William Tytler, Esq., of Woodhouselee, was a member of the society of Writers to the Signet, and besides being author of the above-mentioned work in favour of Queen Mary, wrote various other dissertations and essays, and edited the *Poetical Remains of James I. of Scotland.* He was born in 1711, and died 12th Sept. 1792. His son was the well-known Lord Woodhouselee, and his grandson, Patrick Fraser Tytler, was author of the well-known and excellent history of Scotland, published in 1828–43.

[2] "In May, writing to Mr. Tytler of Woodhouselee on the Vindication of Mary Stuart, [Burns perpetrated] his worst lines,—

> Tho' something like moisture conglobes in my eye,
> Let no one misdeem me disloyal."
>
> —PROFESSOR NICHOL.

[3] Burns on several occasions speaks of his forebears as having suffered and even lost their lives from devotion to the cause of the Stuarts; but nothing is definitely known of the matter, and that any of them fell in the cause seems to have been mere speculation.

[4] It strongly marks the cautious spirit of the times, that Dr. Currie omitted the three last lines of this stanza from his edition of the poet's works. Burns felt when he wrote it that he was treading on dangerous ground. A jest on royalty was then regarded as an unerring proof of disaffection to government, and the peccant author as a legitimate mark for the bolts of authority. These prejudices were strengthened by the progress of events ere the piece passed under the editorial hands of Currie. He paused—and deemed it better to expunge the verse than to subject himself, as well as the author, to the withering charge of disloyalty.

I send you a trifle, a head of a bard,
A trifle scarce worthy your care;
But accept it, good Sir, as a mark of regard,
Sincere as a saint's dying prayer.[1]

Now life's chilly evening dim shades on your eye,
And ushers the long dreary night;
But you, like the star that athwart gilds the sky,
Your course to the latest is bright.

EPIGRAM TO MISS AINSLIE[2] IN CHURCH.

Fair maid, you need not take the hint,
Nor idle texts pursue:
'Twas guilty sinners that he meant,
Not *Angels* such as you.

EPISTLE TO WILLIAM CREECH, BOOKSELLER, EDINBURGH.

SELKIRK, 13th May, 1787.

Auld chuckie Reekie's[3] sair distrest, sorely
Down droops her ance weel-burnish'd crest,
Nae joy her bonnie buskit nest decorated
Can yield ava, at all
Her darling bird that she lo'es best,
Willie's awa!

O Willie was a witty wight,
And had o' things an unco slight; remarkable skill
Auld Reekie aye he keepit tight,
An' trig an' braw: neat and fine
But now they'll busk her like a fright—
Willie's awa!

[1] The "Bard's Picture" mentioned in the title is generally understood to have been a silhouette portrait by an artist named Miers, then practising his art in Edinburgh; but Mr. William Scott Douglas says it was a presentation copy of Beugo's engraving, which was, at the time of his writing, in the possession of Dr. David Laing.

[2] Miss Ainslie was the sister of one of Burns's Edinburgh friends, Robert Ainslie. The two friends made a trip to the south of Scotland in the summer of 1787, in the course of which the poet was introduced to Ainslie's parents, and brothers and sisters. (See vol. i. p. xlviii.) On Sunday, May 6, Burns attended the church at Dunse along with the family, and the clergyman (Dr. Bowmaker) gave out a text containing special threatenings against hardened sinners. Observing Miss Ainslie searching for it, Burns asked for her Bible, and immediately wrote the above lines on the inner side of one of the boards.

[3] Edinburgh is commonly known in familiarly affectionate language by the appellation "Auld Reekie," being called "Reekie" from the smoke (Scotticé *reek*) hanging over the town from its many chimneys. The epithet is said to have been first applied to it by James VI., on looking at the town early in the morning from the Fife coast, while the citizens were kindling their fires for the day. *Chuckie*, literally a hen, represents the city in her maternal relation, as grieving for the absence from the nest of her "darling bird," William Creech.

The stiffest o' them a' he bow'd,
The bauldest o' them a' he cow'd;
They durst nae mair than he allow'd,
That was a law:
We've lost a birkie weel worth gowd— fellow gold
Willie's awa!

Now gawkies, tawpies, gowks and fools, silly girls simpletons
Frae colleges and boarding schools,
May sprout like simmer puddock-stools, toad-stools
In glen or shaw; wood
He wha could brush them down to mools, the dust
Willie's awa!

The brethren o' the Commerce-Chaumer[1]
May mourn their loss wi' doolfu' clamour; mournful
He was a dictionar and grammar
Among them a';
I fear they'll now make mony a stammer— blunder
Willie's awa!

Nae mair we see his levee door
Philosophers and Poets pour,[2]
And toothy critics by the score,
In bloody raw! row
The adjutant o' a' the core, corps
Willie's awa!

Now worthy Gregory's Latin face,
Tytler's and Greenfield's modest grace;
Mackenzie, Stewart, such a brace
As Rome ne'er saw;[3]
They a' maun meet some ither place, must other
Willie's awa!

Poor Burns e'en Scotch drink canna quicken,
He cheeps like some bewilder'd chicken, chirps
Scar'd frae its minnie and the cleckin' mother brood
By hoodie-craw;
Grief's gi'en his heart an unco kickin', severe
Willie's awa!

Now ev'ry sour-mou'd girnin' blellum, fretting noisy talker
And Calvin's folk are fit to fell him;

[1] The Chamber of Commerce of Edinburgh, of which Mr. Creech was secretary.—R. B.

[2] Many literary gentlemen were accustomed to meet at Mr. Creech's house at breakfast.—R. B.

[3] The gentlemen receiving friendly mention in this stanza were:—Dr. James Gregory, author of the *Conspectus Medicinæ;* Tytler of Woodhouselee, author of the *Defence of Mary Queen of Scots;* Dr. William Greenfield, professor of rhetoric in the Edinburgh University; Henry Mackenzie, author of *The Man of Feeling;* and Dugald Stewart, professor of moral philosophy.

And self-conceited critic skellum — nobody
His quill may draw;
He wha could brawlie ward their *bellum*, — finely
Willie's awa!

Up wimpling stately Tweed I've sped,
And Eden scenes on crystal Jed,
And Ettrick banks now roaring red,
While tempests blaw;
But every joy and pleasure's fled—
Willie's awa!

May I be slander's common speech;
A text for infamy to preach;
And lastly, streekit out to bleach — stretched
In winter snaw;
When I forget thee, Willie Creech,
Though far awa!

May never wicked fortune touzle him! — rumple
May never wicked men bamboozle him!
Until a pow as auld's Methusalem — head (poll)
He canty claw! — cheerful
Then to the blessed New Jerusalem,
Fleet wing awa![1]

EPIGRAM WRITTEN AT INVERARY.[2]

Whoe'er he be that sojourns here,
I pity much his case,
Unless he come to wait upon
The Lord their God, his Grace.

There's naething here but Highland pride,
And Highland scab and hunger;
If Providence has sent me here,
'Twas surely in his anger.

[1] This epistle addressed to his publisher, then on a visit to London, was written by Burns during his Border tour, taken in May, 1787, after the publication of his poems. It may be here stated, that Burns afterwards found reason to change his opinion of his publisher. Creech's great failing was an indisposition to part with money. Burns could hardly wring the profits of his poems out of his hands after months spent in eager and unremitting solicitation. In other respects, however, Creech was a man above the common run—told a good story with unfailing effect—wrote, without much vigour, it is true, but with considerable power of irony, a volume since reprinted—and delighted in the society and conversation of men of letters. His shop was the lounge for all the men of talent in the Scottish capital, and his morning *conversaziones* were long remembered as "Creech's levees." Mr. Creech died 14th January, 1815, aged 70.

[2] This refers to some unpleasant incident of his West Highland tour in the summer of 1787. Perhaps some of the numerous visitors at the castle had to seek accommodation at the inn, and more attention might be paid to them than to the irascible, and then comparatively unknown, poet.

EPIGRAM ON MISS JEAN SCOTT.[1]

Oh! had each Scot of ancient times,
Been JEANIE SCOTT, as thou art;
The bravest heart on English ground,
Had yielded like a coward.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF SIR JAMES HUNTER BLAIR.[2]

To a copy of this piece presented to Capt. Riddell of Glenriddell Burns appended the following note: "This performance is but mediocre, but my grief was sincere. The last time I saw the worthy, public-spirited man—a man he was! how few of the two-legged breed that pass for such, deserve the designation!—he pressed my hand and asked me with the most friendly warmth if it was in his power to serve me; and if so, that I would oblige him by telling him how. I had nothing to ask of him; but if ever a child of his should be so unfortunate as to be under the necessity of asking anything of so poor a man as I am, it may not be in my power to grant it, but by G— I shall try."—A copy was sent by the poet to his friend Robert Aiken, July, 1787.

The lamp of day, with ill-presaging glare,
Dim, cloudy, sunk beneath the western wave;
Th' inconstant blast howl'd thro' the darkening air,
And hollow whistled in the rocky cave.

Lone as I wander'd by each cliff and dell,
Once the lov'd haunts of Scotia's royal train;[3]
Or mus'd where limpid streams, once hallow'd, well,[4]
Or mould'ring ruins mark the sacred fane;[5]

Th' increasing blast roar'd round the beetling rocks,
The clouds swift-wing'd flew o'er the starry sky,
The groaning trees untimely shed their locks,
And shooting meteors caught the startled eye.

The paly moon rose in the livid east,
And 'mong the cliffs disclos'd a stately form,
In weeds of woe that frantic beat her breast,
And mix'd her wailings with the raving storm.

Wild to my heart the filial pulses glow,
'Twas Caledonia's trophied shield I view'd:
Her form majestic droop'd in pensive woe,
The lightning of her eye in tears imbued.

[1] All that is known of Jeanie Scott is that she was a native of Ayr.

[2] This gentleman was a native of Ayr, and partner in the banking-house of Sir William Forbes and Company. He died 1st July, 1787, in the forty-seventh year of his age. He was Lord-provost of Edinburgh from October 1784 to October 1786. To the copy sent to his friend, Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, Burns appended these words:—"The melancholy occasion of the foregoing poem affects not only individuals but a country."

[3] The King's Park, at Holyrood-house.—R. B.

[4] St. Anthony's Well.—R. B.

[5] St. Anthony's Chapel.—R. B.

Revers'd that spear, redoubtable in war;
Reclin'd that banner, erst in fields unfurl'd,
That like a deathful meteor gleam'd afar,
And brav'd the mighty monarchs of the world.—

"My patriot son fills an untimely grave!"
With accents wild and lifted arms—she cried;
"Low lies the hand that oft was stretch'd to save,
Low lies the heart that swell'd with honest pride!

"A weeping country joins a widow's tear,
The helpless poor mix with the orphan's cry;
The drooping Arts surround their patron's bier,
And grateful Science heaves the heartfelt sigh.—

"I saw my sons resume their ancient fire;
I saw fair Freedom's blossoms richly blow;
But ah! how hope is born but to expire!
Relentless fate has laid this guardian low.—

"My patriot falls, but shall he lie unsung,
While empty greatness saves a worthless name!
No; every muse shall join her tuneful tongue,
And future ages hear his growing fame.

"And I will join a mother's tender cares,
Thro' future times to make his virtues last,
That distant years may boast of other Blairs"—
She said, and vanish'd with the sweeping blast.

ON READING IN A NEWSPAPER THE DEATH OF JOHN M'LEOD, ESQ.,

BROTHER TO A YOUNG LADY,[1] A PARTICULAR FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

Sad thy tale, thou idle page,
And rueful thy alarms:
Death tears the brother of her love
From Isabella's arms.

[1] Miss Isabella M'Leod, a daughter of the Laird of Raasay, that laird who was visited at Raasay by Dr. Johnson and Boswell. Her elder sister, Miss Flora M'Leod, had married Colonel James Mure-Campbell of Rowallan, who succeeded to the earldom of Loudoun. She died immediately after giving birth to a daughter, Flora, who became Countess of Loudoun at her father's death in 1786. Miss Isabella M'Leod was, therefore, the aunt of the young countess, and to her and the M'Leod family Burns had been introduced by his friend Gavin Hamilton, factor for the Loudoun estate. John M'Leod died on July 20th, 1787, while Burns was residing at Mossgiel for a short time after his sojourn in Edinburgh. Burns was on an intimate footing with the M'Leods during his winter campaign in the capital, and had been much taken with Isabella. She is the subject of the song "Raving winds around her blowing."

Sweetly deckt with pearly dew
The morning rose may blow;
But cold successive noontide blasts
May lay its beauties low.

Fair on Isabella's morn
The sun propitious smil'd;
But, long ere noon, succeeding clouds
Succeeding hopes beguil'd.

Fate oft tears the bosom chords
That nature finest strung:
So Isabella's heart was form'd,
And so that heart was wrung.[1]

Dread Omnipotence, alone,
Can heal the wound he gave;
Can point the brimful grief-worn eyes
To scenes beyond the grave.

Virtue's blossoms there shall blow,
And fear no withering blast;
There Isabella's spotless worth
Shall happy be at last.

TO MISS FERRIER,[2]

ENCLOSING THE ELEGY ON SIR J. H. BLAIR

Nae heathen name shall I prefix
Frae Pindus or Parnassus; — from
Auld Reekie dings them a' to sticks — beats
For rhyme-inspiring lasses.

Jove's tunefu' dochters three times three — daughters
Made Homer deep their debtor;
But, gi'en the body half an ee, — eye
Nine Ferriers wad done better! — would

[1] In the original MS. after the fourth verse occurs the following lines:—

Were it in the poet's power,
Strong as he shares the grief
That pierces Isabella's heart
To give that heart relief.

In Cunningham's edition of Burns these lines have been restored; the propriety of this may be questioned, as they form only part of a proposition, which would require to be completed in a new stanza. Evidently Burns deliberately sacrificed them, the poem being perfect without them.

[2] The Miss Ferrier here addressed was a daughter of Mr. James Ferrier, W.S., afterwards, with Sir Walter Scott, one of the principal clerks of the Court of Session. He resided in George Street, as may be inferred from the above verses. A younger sister of Miss Ferrier was Miss Susan Edmonston Ferrier, sometimes called "the Scottish Miss Edgeworth," authoress of *Marriage*, *The Inheritance*, and *Destiny*. Miss Ferrier was aunt of the subtle and brilliant metaphysician James Frederick Ferrier, professor of moral philosophy in the University of St. Andrews, and editor of the collected works of Professor John Wilson, one of whose daughters he had married.

Last day my mind was in a bog,
  Down George's Street I stoited; walked stupidly
A creeping cauld prosaic fog
  My very senses doited. benumbed

Do what I dought to set her free, could
  My saul lay in the mire;
Ye turned a neuk—I saw your ee— corner
  She took the wing like fire!

The mournfu' sang I here enclose,
  In gratitude I send you;
And pray, in rhyme as weel as prose,
  A' gude things may attend you!

EPIGRAMMATIC VERSES.[1]

WRITTEN ON A WINDOW OF THE INN AT CARRON.

We cam na here to view your warks,
  In hopes to be mair wise,
But only, lest we gang to hell,
  It may be nae surprise;

But whan we tirled at your door, tapped
  Your porter dought na hear us; did not choose to
Sae may, should we to hell's yetts come, gates
  Your billy Satan sair us! brother serve

LINES WRITTEN ON A PANE OF GLASS AT STIRLING.[2]

Here Stuarts once in glory reign'd,
And laws for Scotia's weal ordain'd;

[1] The day Burns and his travelling companion, Mr. William Nicol, teacher, sought admission to Carron Iron-works was Sunday, and so their exclusion was nothing remarkable. Burns expressed his disappointment by writing the above lines, in a very questionable taste and temper, with a diamond on the window-pane.

[2] Burns paid a visit to Stirling in his Highland tour, in August 1787. The sight of its castle, celebrated as in former times the favourite residence of royalty, roused his half-slumbering Jacobitism. He vented his feelings in the above lines, which he scratched on the window of the inn. The concluding couplet, however, contains some grossly unjust expressions. A friend is said to have pointed out to the poet the impropriety of the verses. He defended them, asserting that they were true. The other retorted, that this might be looked on in the light of an aggravation. "Stay," said Burns, "I will reprove myself;" and immediately wrote the "Reproof," on the same pane which contained the offending verses. Some one—it has been charged on the Rev. Mr. Hamilton, the minister of Gladsmuir—expostulated with the poet for his attack on royalty in a set of verses more distinguished by their loyalty than their point or judgment. The "Reply," was written in answer to this "expostulation." In the Glenriddell MSS. a slightly different version is found with an introductory statement as follows: "My imprudent lines were answered, very petulantly, by *Somebody*, I believe a Rev. Mr. Hamilton. In a MS. where I met the answer, I wrote below:—

With Esop's lion, Burns says, sore I feel
Each other blow, but d—mn that ass's heel."

But now unroof'd their palace stands,
Their sceptre's sway'd by foreign hands;
Fallen indeed, and to the earth,
Whence grovelling reptiles take their birth.
The injured Stuart line is gone!
A race outlandish fills their throne;
An idiot race, to honour lost;
Who know them best despise them most.

A REPROOF BY THE WRITER OF THE LINES.

Rash mortal, and slanderous poet, thy name
Shall no longer appear in the records of fame;
Dost not know that old Mansfield, who writes like the Bible,
Says the more 'tis a truth, sir, the more 'tis a libel!

REPLY TO A HOSTILE CRITIC OF THE LINES.

Like Esop's lion, Burns says, "sore I feel
All others' scorn—but damn that ass's heel!"

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL OVER THE CHIMNEY-PIECE

IN THE PARLOUR OF THE INN AT KENMORE, TAYMOUTH.[1]

Burns visited Taymouth on 29th August, 1787, when on his Highland tour in company with his friend W. Nicol of the High School, Edinburgh. His brief note of the visit in his journal runs: "Taymouth—described in rhyme—meet the Hon. Charles Townshend."

Admiring Nature in her wildest grace,
These northern scenes with weary feet I trace;
O'er many a winding dale and painful steep,
Th' abodes of covey'd grouse and timid sheep,

[1] Taymouth Castle, the seat of the Marquis of Breadalbane, is situated in the beautiful valley of the Tay in Perthshire, not far from the eastern extremity of Loch Tay, the out-flowing waters of which form the river of the same name. Just at the outlet of the loch is situated the little village of Kenmore with a bridge over the young Tay. The castle stands in a fine park, and the mountains on the north-west include the grand and lofty Ben Lawers. Taymouth Castle consists of a large modern quadrangular pile, with round towers at the corners, and a square central tower terminating in an airy pavilion. To the west projects the remnant of the former mansion, a strong tower built in the reign of James VI.; while to the east extends a range of outhouses and offices. The Tay passes behind the house, towards Aberfeldy and Dunkeld, skirted on each side by magnificent woods. Among these there is an avenue of limes extending to a mile, which is said to convey to most minds the impression of some more than usually august Gothic cathedral.

The Breadalbane family is descended from Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, a younger son of the first ennobled person of the house of Campbell: he was one of the knights of Rhodes, subsequently designated of Malta. The fourth in descent from this warrior, also named Sir Colin Campbell of Glenorchy, built the original house just alluded to, the name of which was till a comparatively recent period *Balloch*, that is *bealoch*, a mouth or gap, expressive of the situation of the mansion at the opening of the valley of the Tay.

My savage journey, curious, I pursue,
Till fam'd Breadalbane opens to my view.
The meeting cliffs each deep-sunk glen divides,
The woods, wild scatter'd, clothe their ample sides;
Th' outstretching lake, embosom'd 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder and amazement fills;
The Tay, meand'ring sweet in infant pride,
The palace, rising on its verdant side;
The lawns, wood-fring'd in Nature's native taste;
The hillocks, dropt in Nature's careless haste;
The arches, striding o'er the new-born stream;
The village, glittering in the noontide beam—
* * * * * *
Poetic ardours in my bosom swell,
Lone wand'ring by the hermit's mossy cell:
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods;
Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods—
* * * * * *
Here Poesy might wake her heav'n-taught lyre,
And look through Nature with creative fire;
Here to the wrongs of Fate half reconcil'd,
Misfortune's lighten'd steps might wander wild;
And Disappointment, in these lonely bounds,
Find balm to soothe her bitter, rankling wounds;
Here heart-struck Grief might heav'n-ward stretch her scan,
And injur'd Worth forget and pardon man.

[Left unfinished.]

SONG—THE BIRKS OF ABERFELDY.[1]

TUNE—"*The Birks of Abergeldie.*"

Burns says "I composed these stanzas standing under the Falls of Moness, near Aberfeldy." The chorus belongs to an old song, called "The Birks of Abergeldie," of which there are several versions. One of them is given, along with this song, in Johnson's *Museum*.

Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go,
Bonnie lassie, will ye go,
To the birks of Aberfeldy? birches

Now simmer blinks on flowery braes, slopes
And o'er the crystal streamlets plays,
Come let us spend the lightsome days
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

[1] It was in the course of his Highland tour, August—September 1787, that Burns visited the celebrated waterfalls of Moness, in the neighbourhood of the village of Aberfeldy in Strath Tay. These falls, which occur in a deep and narrow chasm behind Moness House, are described by Pennant in language sufficiently complimentary—"an epitome (he calls them) of everything that can be admired in the curiosity of

The little birdies blithely sing,
While o'er their heads the hazels hing, hang
Or lightly flit on wanton wing
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

The braes ascend like lofty wa's, hill-sides
The foamy stream deep-roaring fa's,
O'er-hung wi' fragrant spreading shaws, groves
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

The hoary cliffs are crown'd wi' flowers,
White o'er the linns the burnie pours, steep rocks brooklet
And rising, weets wi' misty showers wets
The birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

Let Fortune's gifts at random flee,
They ne'er shall draw a wish frae me, from
Supremely blest wi' love and thee,
In the birks of Aberfeldy.
Bonnie lassie, &c.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF BRUAR WATER,[1]

TO THE NOBLE DUKE OF ATHOLE.

In his letter to Mr. Walker, tutor to the duke's family, from Inverness, 5th September, in which this poem was inclosed, Burns writes:—"I have just time to write the foregoing, and to tell you that it was, at least the most part of it, the effusion of a half hour I spent at Bruar. I do not mean it was *extempore*, for I have endeavoured to brush it up as well as Mr. Nicol's chat and the jogging of the chaise would allow."

My Lord, I know your noble ear
Woe ne'er assails in vain;
Embolden'd thus, I beg you'll hear
Your humble slave complain,

waterfalls." They comprehend not only the usual phenomenon of a rivulet dashing down a rocky recess in the side of a range of hills, but several accessory cascades, which pour down the precipitous sides of that recess, and unite their waters with those of the principal stream below. The visitor of this beautiful scene first enters a glen, called the Den of Moness, clothed with hazel and mountain-ash in great luxuriance. As he advances, the sides of this glen become sheer precipices, of about two hundred feet in height, so near each other that the trees shooting out from the respective sides almost intermingle their branches. When visited by Burns, the beautiful domain of Moness was the property of a gentleman named Fleming. It now belongs to the Breadalbane family.

The introduction of the birks into this picturesque locality by Burns is a poetic license, suggested by the almost identical chorus of the old song the "Birks of Abergeldie." We quote in reference to this from the *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland* (Edin. 1882):—"Strange that . . . Aberfeldy should most be famed for what it has not, and seemingly never had, the 'birks' of Burns's lyric. Rowans there are in abundance, and a myth has of course arisen that these have superseded the birks; but the absence of the latter from Aberfeldy in 1803 is as certain as their presence at Abergeldie years before Burns's day." The absence of the birches in 1803 was noted by Dorothy Wordsworth. Abergeldie Castle is on Deeside, near Balmoral.

[1] Bruar Falls in Athole are exceedingly picturesque and beautiful; but their effect is much impaired by

How saucy Phœbus' scorching beams,
  In flaming summer-pride,
Dry-withering, waste my foamy streams,
  And drink my crystal tide.

The lightly-jumpin' glowrin' trouts, staring
  That thro' my waters play,
If, in their random, wanton spouts, darts
  They near the margin stray;
If, hapless chance! they linger lang,
  I'm scorching up so shallow,
They're left the whitening stanes amang, stones
  In gasping death to wallow.

Last day I grat wi' spite and teen, wept vexation
  As Poet Burns came by,
That to a Bard I should be seen
  Wi' half my channel dry:
A panegyric rhyme, I ween,
  Even as I was he shor'd me; promised
But had I in my glory been,
  He, kneeling, wad ador'd me. would have

the want of trees and shrubs.—R. B. The Bruar, a stream of northern Perthshire, a tributary of the Garry, is poured through a chasm in the hills which bound the vale of the Garry on the north, two or three miles to the west of Blair-Athole, and near the line of the road between Perth and Inverness. In its descent it makes two falls, or rather sets of falls, of which that delineated in the engraving is the *upper*. The whole scene, as it existed in the days of Burns, is thus described by Dr. Garnett: "Before we reached Blair we passed the small village of Bruar which takes its name from a turbulent stream, called Bruar Water, that rolls along its rocky bed under a bridge. We went up the left bank of this river, whose channel is the most rugged that can be conceived; the rocks which form it have been worn into the most grotesque shapes by the fury of the water. A footpath has lately been made by the Duke of Athole, which conducts the stranger in safety along the side of the chasm, where he has an opportunity of seeing, in a very short time, several very fine cascades; one over which a bridge is thrown, forms a very picturesque object. This is called the lower fall of Bruar. The water here rushes under a bridge, and falls in a full broad sheet over the rocky steep, and descends impetuously through a natural arch into a dark black pool, as if to take breath before it resumes its course, and rushes down to the Garry.

"Proceeding up the same side of the river, along the footpath, we came in sight of another rustic bridge, and a noble cascade, consisting of three falls or breaks, one immediately above another; but the lowest is equal in height to both the others taken together. This is called the upper fall of the Bruar. Crossing the bridge over this tremendous cataract, with trembling steps, we walked down the other bank of the river, to a point from whence we enjoyed the view of this fine fall to great advantage. The shelving rocks on each side of the bridge, with the water precipitating itself from rock to rock, and at last shooting headlong, filling with its spray the deep chasm, form a scene truly sublime."

Burns visited the Falls of the Bruar during his northern tour. Professor Walker (whom he had met, in the spring of this year, at the house of Dr. Blacklock), at that time living in the family of the Duke of Athole in the capacity of tutor, has left us a sketch of the poet's visit to the scenery of Blair-Athole, in which he says:—"I had often, like others, experienced the pleasures which arise from the sublime or elegant landscape; but I never saw those feelings so intense as in Burns. When we reached a rustic hut on the river Tilt, where it is overhung with a woody precipice, from which there is a noble waterfall, he threw himself on the heathy seat, and gave himself up to a tender, abstracted, and rapturous enthusiasm of imagination. . . . It was with much difficulty I prevailed on him to quit this spot, and to be introduced in proper time to supper. . . . After leaving Blair, he, by the duke's advice, visited the Falls of Bruar, and in a few days I received a letter from Inverness, with the verses inclosed." Bruar Water no longer mourns the absence of "lofty firs and ashes cool." The duke complied with the poet's suggestion, and caused a great number of trees to be planted, which nave added greatly to the charms of the scene. But the "Tay Bridge gale" of 1879 made sad havoc, which has only partially been repaired.

Here, foaming down the shelvy rocks,
In twisting strength I rin; run
There, high my boiling torrent smokes,
Wild-roaring o'er a linn: precipice
Enjoying large each spring and well,
As nature gave them me,
I am, altho' I say't mysel',
Worth gaun a mile to see. going

Would then my noble master please
To grant my highest wishes,
He'll shade my banks wi' tow'ring trees,
And bonnie spreading bushes.
Delighted doubly then, my Lord,
You'll wander on my banks,
And listen mony a grateful bird
Return you tuneful thanks.

The sober laverock, warbling wild, lark
Shall to the skies aspire;
The gowdspink, music's gayest child, goldfinch
Shall sweetly join the choir:
The blackbird strong, the lintwhite clear, linnet
The mavis mild and mellow; thrush
The robin pensive Autumn cheer,
In all her locks of yellow:

This too, a covert shall ensure,
To shield them from the storm;
And coward maukin sleep secure, hare
Low in her grassy form:
Here shall the shepherd make his seat,
To weave his crown of flow'rs;
Or find a sheltering safe retreat
From prone-descending show'rs.

And here, by sweet endearing stealth,
Shall meet the loving pair,
Despising worlds, with all their wealth,
As empty idle care:
The flow'rs shall vie in all their charms
The hour of heav'n to grace,
And birks extend their fragrant arms
To screen the dear embrace.

Here, haply too, at vernal dawn,
Some musing bard may stray,
And eye the smoking, dewy lawn,
And misty mountain gray;

Or, by the reaper's nightly beam,
Mild-chequering thro' the trees,
Rave to my darkly-dashing stream,
Hoarse-swelling on the breeze.

Let lofty firs, and ashes cool,
My lowly banks o'erspread,
And view, deep-bending in the pool,
Their shadows' wat'ry bed.
Let fragrant birks, in woodbines drest,
My craggy cliffs adorn;
And, for the little songster's nest,
The close-embow'ring thorn.

So may, old Scotia's darling hope,
Your little angel band,[1]
Spring, like their fathers, up to prop
Their honour'd native land!
So may, thro' Albion's farthest ken,
To social flowing glasses,
The grace be—"Athole's honest men,
And Athole's bonnie lasses!"

WRITTEN WITH A PENCIL,

STANDING BY THE FALL OF FYERS, NEAR LOCH-NESS.[2]

Among the heathy hills and ragged woods,
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy floods;
Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds,
Where, thro' a shapeless breach, his stream resounds.
As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep recoiling surges foam below,
Prone down the rock the whitening sheet descends,
And viewless echo's ear, astonish'd, rends.

[1] The three daughters of the duke, the eldest twelve years of age, the next seven, the third an infant.

[2] From Burns's journal we learn that this visit to the Fall of Fyers (or Foyers) was on Wednesday, 5th September, 1787. In the evening he dined with Mr. William Inglis, afterwards Provost of Inverness, and it was observed that he was rather thoughtful and silent, being probably under strong emotion produced by the majesty and sublimity of the scene which he had just visited.

"The Fyers is not a very large stream, except in rainy weather; consequently there are great variations in the aspect of the cascade. In its medium fulness it pours through a narrow gullet in the rock in a round unbroken stream, which gradually whitens as it descends, like an old Jew's beard, till it falls into a half-seen profound, two hundred and forty feet below the point of descent. A dense mist is constantly seen rising from the broken water, like the heavenward aspirations of an afflicted and tortured spirit. The noise is usually very loud. About a quarter of a mile further up the ravine there is another cascade, usually called the Upper Fall; a fearful gulf, down which the water descends by three leaps, and over which a bridge has been thrown, by way of station, for a sight of the cataract. All this stupendous ravine is covered by birches, on whose every leaf a vapoury dew continually hangs. Dr. Clarke, on visiting Fyers, declared it to be a finer cascade than that of Tivoli, and of all he had ever seen inferior only to Terni."—ROBERT CHAMBERS.——Dr. Johnson visited the fall in his tour in Scotland, but the stream was then very small.

Dim-seen, thro' rising mists and ceaseless show'rs,
The hoary cavern, wide-surrounding, low'rs.
Still thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
And still below the horrid caldron boils—

[Left unfinished.]

EPIGRAM—THE HIGHLAND WELCOME.

COMPOSED AND REPEATED BY BURNS, TO THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE ON TAKING LEAVE AT A PLACE IN THE HIGHLANDS, WHERE HE HAD BEEN HOSPITABLY ENTERTAINED.[1]

When death's dark stream I ferry o'er,
A time that surely shall come—
In Heaven itself I'll ask no more,
Than just a Highland welcome.

STRATHALLAN'S LAMENT.[2]

TUNE—"*Strathallan's Lament.*"

"This air," says Burns in the Glenriddell copy of Johnson's *Museum* already referred to, "is the composition of one of the worthiest and best-hearted men living—Allan Masterton, schoolmaster in Edinburgh. As he and I were both sprouts of Jacobitism, we agreed to dedicate the words and air to that cause.—To tell the matter of fact, except when my passions were heated by some accidental cause, my Jacobitism was merely by way of *vive la bagatelle.*"

Thickest night, o'erhang my dwelling!
Howling tempests, o'er me rave!
Turbid torrents, wintry swelling,
Still surround my lonely cave!

Crystal streamlets, gently flowing,
Busy haunts of base mankind,
Western breezes, softly blowing,
Suit not my distracted mind.

In the cause of right engaged,
Wrongs injurious to redress,
Honour's war we strongly waged,
But the heavens denied success.

Ruin's wheel has driven o'er us,
Not a hope that dare attend,
The wide world is all before us—
But a world without a friend!

[1] Several localities have been mentioned as identified with this production, as Dalnacardoch, Kilravock, &c. There would be many experiences of the warmest hospitality during the Highland tour.

[2] Viscount Strathallan commanded a squadron of horse at the battle of Culloden, where he fell. The words of the song are supposed to be uttered by his son James Drummond, after the events of that fatal day had for ever blasted the hopes of the adherents of the unfortunate house of Stuart.

SONG—CASTLE GORDON.[2]

TUNE—"*Morag.*" [But see the end of the note to the words.]

Streams that glide in orient plains,
Never bound by winter's chains!
  Glowing here on golden sands,
There[1] commix'd(1) with foulest stains,
  From tyranny's empurpled bands:(2)
These, their richly-gleaming waves,
I leave to(3) tyrants and their slaves;
Give me the stream that sweetly laves
  The banks by Castle Gordon.

Spicy(4) forests, ever gay,
Shading from the burning ray,
  Hapless wretches sold to toil,
Or the ruthless native's way,
  Bent on slaughter, blood, and spoil:

[1] In the Edinburgh Common-place Book are the following variations: (1) immixed, (2) hands, (3) the, (4) Torrid.

[2] Gordon Castle, one of the finest mansions north of the Firth of Forth, is situated in the parish of Bellie and county of Moray, on the right bank of the Spey, and at the distance of about five miles from the efflux of that river into the Moray Firth. The house lies in a beautifully-wooded park, generally of level ground, and covering a very large area. The grand entry is by an arched building close beside the village of Fochabers; from which a road winds about a mile to the front of the castle. The front of the building, 568 feet in length, broken into strong light and shade by the recession of some of its parts, and gaining dignity from a lofty tower surmounting the centre, is of that grandeur which suits to almost princely rank and influence. From the house the view outward is equally fine. The site of the castle, in the Bog of Gight, was selected as a defensible position for the erection of a feudal tower by George, second Earl of Huntly, who died in 1501. This house was accessible by a narrow causeway through a morass, and by a drawbridge across a moat. It was called the House of the Bog, or the Bog, the name constantly given to it by Spalding in his many references to it in connection with the troublous affairs of the civil war. Each of the noble line who lived in it, successively earls of Huntly, marquises of Huntly, and dukes of Gordon, was also popularly distinguished by the familiar appellative of *The Gudeman o' the Bog.* Additions and alterations took place at different times, until in the latter part of the eighteenth century, George, fourth duke of Gordon, erected the present magnificent mansion—retaining, however, the original fortalice of the fifteenth century, towering high and proud over all the rest. With the fifth duke of Gordon, May 28, 1836, expired the main line of this great historical family, the title of duke becoming extinct, while Gordon Castle, with the connected territory, to the value of £30,000 per annum, then became the property of the Duke of Richmond, son of the eldest sister of the deceased duke. The representation of the family and the title of Marquis of Huntly devolved at the same time upon George, Earl of Aboyne, descended from a younger son of the second marquis, who was beheaded in 1649. The dukedom of Gordon nas latterly been conferred on the Duke of Richmond, who is now Duke of Richmond and Gordon (as also of Lennox).

George, fourth duke of Gordon—himself a clever writer of verses—and his beautiful and witty duchess, Jane Maxwell, were, it is well known, fond of the society of literary men. Beattie was their frequent guest at this noble mansion, and an intimate correspondent of the duchess. Burns, during the first winter that he resided in Edinburgh, was introduced to her grace, whose name appears in the list of the subscribers to his first metropolitan edition, for twenty-one copies. In the course of his Highland tour with Mr. Nicol (September, 1787), coming to Fochabers, and presuming, says Dr. Currie, on his acquaintance with the duchess, he proceeded to Gordon Castle, leaving Mr. Nicol at the inn in the village. At the castle our poet was received with the utmost hospitality and kindness, and the family being about to sit down to dinner, he was invited to take his place at the table as a matter of course. This invitation he accepted, and after drinking a few glasses of wine he rose up and proposed to withdraw. On being pressed to stay, he mentioned for the first time his engagement with his fellow-traveller; and his noble host offering to send a servant to conduct Mr. Nicol to the castle, Burns insisted on undertaking that office himself. He was, however, accompanied by a gentleman, a particular acquaintance of the duke, by whom the invitation was delivered in all the forms

Woods that ever verdant wave,
I leave the tyrant and the slave;
Give me the groves that lofty brave
The storms by Castle Gordon.

Wildly here, without control,
Nature reigns and rules the whole;
In that sober, pensive mood,
Dearest to the feeling soul,
She plants the forest, pours the flood:
Life's poor day I'll musing rave,
And find at night a sheltering cave,
Where waters flow and wild woods wave,
By bonnie Castle Gordon.

SONG—LADY ONLIE.[1]

TUNE—"*The Ruffian's Rant.*"

A' the lads o' Thornie-bank,
When they gae to the shore o' Bucky, gae
They'll stap in and tak' a pint stap
Wi' Lady Onlie, honest lucky! goodwife
Lady Onlie, honest lucky,
Brews gude ale at shore o' Bucky,
I wish her sale for her gude ale,
The best on a' the shore o' Bucky.

of politeness. The invitation came too late; the pride of Nicol was inflamed into a high degree of passion by the neglect which he had already suffered. He had ordered the horses to be put to the carriage, being determined to proceed on his journey alone, and they found him parading the streets of Fochabers, before the door of the inn, venting his anger on the postilion for the slowness with which he obeyed his commands. As no explanation nor entreaty could change the purpose of his fellow-traveller, our poet was reduced to the necessity of separating from him entirely, or of instantly proceeding with him on their journey. He chose the last of these alternatives; and seating himself beside Nicol in the post-chaise with mortification and regret, he turned his back on Gordon Castle, where he had promised himself some happy days. Sensible, however, of the great kindness of the noble family, he made the best return in his power, by composing the above song, which he sent to James Hoy, librarian at Gordon Castle. How much the poet felt the abruptness of his departure may be gathered from a passage in one of his letters to Mr. Hoy:—"I shall certainly, among my legacies, leave my latest curse to that unlucky predicament which hurried—tore me away from Castle Gordon. May that obstinate son of Latin prose be curst to Scotch mile periods, and damned to seven league paragraphs; while declension and conjugation, gender, number, and tense, under the ragged banners of dissonance and disarrangement, eternally rank against him in hostile array." Mr. Hoy's reply runs: "Your song I showed without producing the author, and it was judged by the duchess to be the production of Dr. Beattie. I sent a copy of it, by her grace's desire, to a Mrs. M'Pherson in Badenoch, who sings 'Morag' and all other Gaelic songs in great perfection. When the duchess was informed that you were the author, she wished you had written the verses in Scotch."—— "Morag," the tune above alluded to, cannot be sung to the above poem, as may be seen by comparing its measure with that of the song (a few pages farther on) beginning "Loud blaw the frosty breezes," to which the air is suitable.

[1] This ditty was composed in the autumn of 1787 and appeared in the second volume of the *Museum*. It is probably founded on some snatches of a song Burns had heard during his northern tour, Buckie being a fishing town on the Banffshire coast. The air formerly named as above is now better known as "Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch."

Her house sae bien, her curch sae clean, comfortable cap
I wat she is a dainty chucky; amiable matron (lit. hen)
And cheerlie blinks the ingle-gleed gleams blazing fire
Of Lady Onlie, honest lucky!
Lady Onlie, honest lucky, &c.

SONG—THENIEL MENZIES' BONNIE MARY.

TUNE—"*The Ruffian's Rant.*"[1]

In coming by the brig o' Dye,[2]
At Darlet we a blink did tarry; moment
As day was dawin in the sky, dawning
We drank a health to bonnie Mary.
Theniel Menzies' bonnie Mary,
Theniel Menzies' bonnie Mary;
Charlie Gregor tint his plaidie, lost
Kissin' Theniel's bonnie Mary.

Her een sae bright, her brow sae white, eyes
Her haffet locks as brown's a berry; temple
And aye they dimpl't wi' a smile,
The rosy cheeks o' bonnie Mary.
Theniel Menzies', &c.

We lap and danced the lee-lang day, leaped live-long
Till piper lads were wae and weary; sad
But Charlie gat the spring to pay, got tune
For kissin' Theniel's bonnie Mary.
Theniel Menzies', &c.

ON SCARING SOME WATER FOWL IN LOCH-TURIT,

A WILD SCENE AMONG THE HILLS OF OCHTERTYRE.[3]

"This was the production of a solitary forenoon's walk from Oughtertyre House. I lived there, the guest of Sir William Murray, for two or three weeks, and was much flattered by my hospitable reception."—BURNS, GLENRIDDELL MSS.

Why, ye tenants of the lake,
For me your wat'ry haunt forsake?
Tell me, fellow-creatures, why
At my presence thus you fly?

[1] See note to preceding song.

[2] The Dye is a Kincardineshire stream, a tributary of the Feuch, which falls into the Dee near Banchory. The "brig" is on the line of the main road connecting Forfarshire and Deeside.

[3] Ochtertyre, or Auchtertyre, is a place of famed beauty in Perthshire, situated about two miles from Crieff, on what may be described as the last and lowest terrace of the Highlands, with a view towards the more fertile south. By the readers of Burns it

Why disturb your social joys,
Parent, filial, kindred ties?—
Common friend to you and me,
Nature's gifts to all are free:
Peaceful keep your dimpling wave,
Busy feed, or wanton lave;
Or beneath the sheltering rock,
Bide the surging billow's shock.

Conscious, blushing for our race,
Soon, too soon, your fears I trace.
Man, your proud usurping foe,
Would be lord of all below:
Plumes himself in Freedom's pride
Tyrant stern to all beside.

The eagle, from the cliffy brow,
Marking you his prey below,
In his breast no pity dwells,
Strong necessity compels:
But man, to whom alone is giv'n
A ray direct from pitying Heav'n,
Glories in his heart humane—
And creatures for his pleasure slain.

In these savage, liquid plains,
Only known to wand'ring swains,
Where the mossy riv'let strays,
Far from human haunts and ways;
All on Nature you depend,
And life's poor season peaceful spend.

Or, if man's superior might
Dare invade your native right,
On the lofty ether borne,
Man with all his pow'rs you scorn;
Swifty seek on clanging wings,
Other lakes and other springs;
And the foe you cannot brave,
Scorn at least to be his slave.

is to be carefully distinguished from another place of the same name, on the Teith, near the southern border of Perthshire, and not far from Stirling, which the poet also visited, it being then the residence of his friend Mr. Ramsay. He visited the former Ochtertyre in October, 1787. The proprietor Sir William Murray, and his wife Lady Augusta, did all that lay within their enlightened and liberal natures to render the poet's stay in their house agreeable to him. In a letter to his friend Nicol, written from the house on the 15th of that month, he says, "I find myself very comfortable here, neither oppressed by ceremony nor mortified by neglect. Lady Augusta is a most engaging woman, and very happy in her family, which makes one's outgoings and incomings very agreeable." The beautiful Euphemia Murray of Lintrose, the "Flower of Strathmore," was present to add to the charms of one of the loveliest spots in Scotland. The young lady was a cousin of Sir William, and frequently an inmate of his house. (See notes to song "Blythe was she," on next page.) Ochtertyre is still in the hands of Sir William Murray's descendants.

SONG—BLYTHE WAS SHE.

TUNE—"*Andro and his cutty gun.*"

"This song was composed," says Burns, "on Miss Euphemia Murray of Lintrose [a cousin of Sir William Murray of Ochertyre], commonly and deservedly called the Flower of Strathmore." The verses were produced during his residence at Ochtertyre (near Crieff). (See note to preceding poem.)

Blythe, blythe, and merry was she,
Blythe was she but and ben: in all parts of the house
Blythe by the banks of Earn,
And blythe in Glenturit glen.[1]

By Auchtertyre grows the aik, oak
On Yarrow banks the birken shaw; birch wood
But Phemie was a bonnier lass
Than braes o' Yarrow ever saw.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

Her looks were like a flow'r in May,
Her smile was like a simmer morn;
She trippèd by the banks of Earn,
As light's a bird upon a thorn.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

Her bonnie face it was as meek
As ony lamb upon a lea;[2]
The evening sun was ne'er sae sweet
As was the blink o' Phemie's ee. eye
Blythe, blythe, &c.

The Highland hills I've wander'd wide,
And o'er the Lowlands I hae been;
But Phemie was the blythest lass
That ever trod the dewy green.
Blythe, blythe, &c.

EPITAPH FOR WILLIAM NICOL,[3] HIGH SCHOOL, EDINBURGH.

Ye maggots, feed on Nicol's brain,
For few such feasts you've gotten;
And fix your claws in Nicol's heart,
For deil a bit o't's rotten.

[1] Glenturret, a glen of Perthshire through which Turret Burn runs a course of 8½ miles, when it falls into the Earn, half a mile west of the town of Crieff.

[2] In these two lines, according to the general opinion of the young lady's friends, Burns had felicitously indicated the peculiar style of beauty of the "Flower of Strathmore." This is supported also by existing portraits, if artist and engraver have been true to their respective parts. The affability and beauty of Miss Murray, then about eighteen years of age, charmed the heart of the poet. This lady was married in 1794, to David Smythe, Esq., of Methven, a judge in the Court of Session, with the title of Lord Methven, by whom she had several children.

[3] The above epitaph is of course a compliment to the poet's cross-grained friend Nicol, who accompanied him on his northern tour in the autumn of 1787.

EPITAPH ON MR. W. CRUICKSHANK.[1]

Honest Will to heaven's gane,
And mony shall lament him,
His faults they a' in Latin lay,
In English nane e'er kent them.

SONG—A ROSE-BUD BY MY EARLY WALK.[2]

TUNE—"*The Rose-bud.*"[3]

A rose-bud by my early walk,
Adown a corn-inclosed bawk,[4]
Sae gently bent its thorny stalk,
All on a dewy morning.
Ere twice the shades o' dawn are fled,
In a' its crimson glory spread,
And drooping rich the dewy head,
It scents the early morning.

Within the bush, her covert nest
A little linnet fondly prest,
The dew sat chilly on her breast
Sae early in the morning.
She soon shall see her tender brood,
The pride, the pleasure o' the wood,
Amang the fresh green leaves bedew'd,
Awake the early morning.

So thou, dear bird, young Jeanie fair!
On trembling string or vocal air,
Shall sweetly pay the tender care
That tends thy early morning.

[1] Cruickshank was one of the classical masters of Edinburgh High School, and consequently a colleague of William Nicol. In his house in St. James's Square Burns resided for some time during his stay in Edinburgh. Jenny Cruickshank, his daughter, is the subject of the two following poems.

[2] Professor Walker in writing of meeting Burns at Mr. Cruickshank's (see preceding note) says: "At the end of October I called for him at the house of a friend, whose daughter, though not more than twelve, was a considerable proficient in music. I found him seated by the harpsichord of this young lady, listening with the keenest interest to his own verses, which she sang and accompanied, and adjusting them to the music by repeated trials of the effect." Miss Cruickshank, the young lady referred to, was married in 1804 to James Henderson, writer, Jedburgh. Robert Chambers speaks of a beautiful oil-painting in the possession of Mr. Henderson's only surviving son, which justifies the appellation of "Rosebud," as, judging from the Hebe-like appearance of the portrait, she must have been a strikingly beautiful girl.

[3] This air is a production of David Sillar, the poet's friend and brother poet and also a fiddler; it shows little sign of its composer being possessed of much musical genius.

[4] A path (usually a ridge left untilled) in a cornfield.

So thou, sweet rose-bud, young and gay,
Shall beauteous blaze upon the day,
And bless the parent's evening ray
That watch'd thy early morning.

TO MISS CRUICKSHANK,

A VERY YOUNG LADY.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF A BOOK, PRESENTED TO HER BY THE AUTHOR.

Beauteous rose-bud, young and gay,
Blooming on thy early May,
Never may'st thou, lovely flow'r,
Chilly shrink in sleety show'r!
Never Boreas' hoary path,
Never Eurus' pois'nous breath,
Never baleful stellar lights,
Taint thee with untimely blights!
Never, never reptile thief
Riot on thy virgin leaf!
Nor even Sol too fiercely view
Thy bosom, blushing still with dew!

May'st thou long, sweet crimson gem,
Richly deck thy native stem;
Till some ev'ning, sober, calm,
Dropping dews, and breathing balm,
While all around the woodland rings,
And ev'ry bird thy requiem sings;
Thou, amid the dirgeful sound,
Shed thy dying honours round,
And resign to parent Earth
The loveliest form she e'er gave birth.

SONG—THE BANKS OF THE DEVON.[1]

TUNE—"*Bhannerach dhon na chri.*"

"These verses were composed on a charming girl, Miss Charlotte Hamilton, who is now (1793) married to James M'Kitrick Adair, Esq., physician. She is sister to my worthy friend Gavin Hamilton of Mauchline, and was born on the banks of Ayr; but was at the time I wrote those lines (1787), residing at Harvieston in Clackmannanshire, on the romantic banks of the little river Devon."—BURNS, GLENRIDDELL MSS.

How pleasant the banks of the clear winding Devon,
With green-spreading bushes, and flowers blooming fair!

[1] Charlotte Hamilton was a half-sister of the poet's friend Gavin Hamilton, their common father being twice married. Her mother was a sister of Margaret Chalmers's mother (see next note). Burns seems to

But the bonniest flower on the banks of the Devon,
  Was once a sweet bud on the braes of the Ayr.
Mild be the sun on this sweet blushing flower,
  In the gay rosy morn as it bathes in the dew!
And gentle the fall of the soft vernal shower,
  That steals on the evening each leaf to renew.

O, spare the dear blossom, ye orient breezes,
  With chill hoary wing as ye usher the dawn!
And far be thou distant, thou reptile, that seizes
  The verdure and pride of the garden and lawn!
Let Bourbon exult in his gay gilded lilies,
  And England triumphant display her proud rose;
A fairer than either adorns the green valleys
  Where Devon, sweet Devon, meandering flows.

SONG—WHERE, BRAVING ANGRY WINTER'S STORMS.[1]

TUNE—"*Neil Gow's Lamentation for Abercairney.*"[2]

"This song I composed on one of the most accomplished of women, Miss Peggy Chalmers that was, now Mrs. Lewis Hay of Forbes and Co.'s bank, Edinburgh."—R. B.

Where, braving angry winter's storms,
  The lofty Ochils rise,
Far in their shade my Peggy's charms
  First blest my wondering eyes;

have imbibed a feeling of high admiration and respect for her. Immediately after their first interview he thus speaks of her in a letter to Gavin Hamilton (28th August, 1787): "Of Charlotte I cannot speak in common terms of admiration; she is not only beautiful but lovely. Her form is elegant; her features not regular, but they have the smile of sweetness, and the settled complacency of good nature in the highest degree; and her complexion, now that she has happily recovered her wonted health, is equal to Miss Burnet's. . . . Her eyes are fascinating; at once expressive of good sense, tenderness, and a noble mind." In a letter written somewhat later to Margaret Chalmers, he says: "Talking of Charlotte, I must tell her I have, to the best of my power, paid her a poetic compliment now completed. The air is admirable, true old Highland. It was the tune of a Gaelic song, which an Inverness lady sung to me when I was there. I was so charmed with it that I begged her to write me a set of it from her singing; for it never had been set before. . . . I won't say the poetry is first-rate; though I am convinced it is very well; and what is not always the case with compliments to ladies, it is not only sincere, but just." The poetic compliment was the above song. On a second visit to Harvieston Burns was accompanied by Dr. Adair of Harrogate, whom he introduced to Miss Hamilton, and who afterwards (in 1789) made her his wife. "I was indebted to Burns," says the doctor, "for a connection, from which I have derived, and expect further to derive, much happiness." Dr. Adair died at Harrogate in 1802; his wife fell into bad health and lived only till 1806.

[1] Margaret (or "Peggy") Chalmers was the youngest daughter of James Chalmers, Esq., of Fingland. By her mother, Euphemia Murdoch, daughter of the last laird of Cumlodden in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, she was connected with the family of Burns's friend, Gavin Hamilton of Mauchline, her mother being sister to Gavin Hamilton's stepmother, and aunt to Charlotte Hamilton celebrated in the preceding poem. The poet became acquainted with Miss Chalmers at Dr. Blacklock's in Edinburgh, and he renewed his acquaintance a little later when she was staying at the house of her uncle by marriage, Mr. Tait of Harvieston, at the foot of the Ochil Hills, the place referred to in the song. Her personal elegance and accomplished mind appear to have made a deep impression on him. She was then the bosom friend of her cousin Charlotte Hamilton, and frequently resided at Harvieston. The poet in his letters usually speaks of the two ladies together. The eleven or twelve letters addressed to her are among the most pleasing in the poet's correspondence.

[2] The musical editor of Johnson's *Museum* says of

As one who, by some savage stream,
A lonely gem surveys,
Astonish'd doubly, marks it beam
With art's most polish'd blaze.

Blest be the wild, sequester'd shade,
And blest the day and hour,
Where Peggy's charms I first survey'd,
When first I felt their pow'r!
The tyrant death, with grim control,
May seize my fleeting breath;
But tearing Peggy from my soul
Must be a stronger death.

SONG—MY PEGGY'S FACE.[1]

TUNE—"*My Peggy's face.*"

Referring to this song, and the one immediately preceding it, Burns writing in the end of 1787 to Miss Margaret Chalmers, the heroine of both, remarks: "I have complimented you chiefly, almost solely, on your mental charms. Shall I be plain with you? I will; so look to it. Personal attractions, madam, you have much above par—wit, understanding, and worth you possess in the first class. . . . I wish to show to the world the odds between a poet's friends and those of simple prosemen."

My Peggy's face, my Peggy's form,
The frost of hermit age might warm;
My Peggy's worth, my Peggy's mind,
Might charm the first of human kind.
I love my Peggy's angel air,
Her face so truly, heavenly fair,
Her native grace, so void of art,—
But I adore my Peggy's heart.

The lily's hue, the rose's dye,
The kindling lustre of an eye;
Who but owns their magic sway!
Who but knows they all decay!
The tender thrill, the pitying tear,
The generous purpose, nobly dear,
The gentle look, that rage disarms,—
These are all immortal charms.

this tune: "The air which old Neil Gow composed on the death of Mr. Moray of Abercairney is an excellent slow strathspey, and is well adapted to the violin, pianoforte, and other musical instruments; but the melody is not at all suitable for the voice, the leaps of eleven notes from E to A in alt. are entirely forbidden in vocal composition, such sudden skips from the natural [chest notes] to the falsetto being utterly destructive of every good effect." We may add that not many non-professional vocalists *could* sing it, its compass being two octaves.

[1] The song was written in 1787 for the second volume of the *Museum*, Burns saying that he had a very strong private reason for wishing it in that volume. It would seem, however, to have been mislaid, as it did not make its appearance until the sixth volume.

SONG—THE YOUNG HIGHLAND ROVER.[1]

TUNE—"*Morag.*"

Loud blaw the frosty breezes,
The snaws the mountains cover;
Like winter on me seizes,
Since my young Highland Rover
Far wanders nations over.
Where'er he go, where'er he stray,
May Heaven be his warden:
Return him safe to fair Strathspey,
And bonnie Castle-Gordon!

The trees, now naked groaning,
Shall soon wi' leaves be hinging, hanging
The birdies, dowie moaning, sorrowfully
Shall a' be blythely singing,
And every flower be springing.
Sae I'll rejoice the lee-lang day, live-long
When by his mighty warden
My youth's return'd to fair Strathspey,
And bonnie Castle-Gordon.

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT DUNDAS, ESQ., OF ARNISTON,[2]

LATE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COURT OF SESSION.

"I have two or three times in my life composed from the wish rather than from the impulse, but I never succeeded to any purpose. One of these times I shall ever remember with gnashing of teeth. 'Twas on the death of the late Lord President Dundas."—BURNS.

Lone on the bleaky hills the straying flocks
Shun the fierce storms among the sheltering rocks;
Down foam the rivulets, red with dashing rains;
The gathering floods burst o'er the distant plains;
Beneath the blast the leafless forests groan;
The hollow caves return a sullen moan.

[1] The Highland rover alluded to was, according to Stenhouse, the Young Chevalier, Prince Charles Stuart, who had been once received as a welcome guest at Gordon Castle before the disastrous day of Culloden.

[2] Robert Dundas of Arniston, elder brother of Lord Melville, was born in 1713, appointed president of the Court of Session in 1760, and died on 13th December, 1787. His eldest son, who was for many years lord advocate of Scotland, and afterwards lord chief-baron, died in 1819. Burns sent a copy of the poem to him, but received no answer. In a letter to Dr. Geddes he says: "I sent a copy of it, with my best prose letter, to the son of the great man, the theme of the piece, by the hand, too, of one of the noblest men in God's world, Alexander Wood, surgeon, when, behold! his Solicitorship took no more notice of my poem or me than I had been a strolling fiddler, who had made free with his lady's name over a silly new reel! Did the gentleman imagine that I looked for any dirty gratuity?" The poem was written at the suggestion of Alexander Wood, surgeon, Edinburgh, and Charles Hay, advocate, afterwards Lord Newton. But Burns felt the task an ungrateful one, and said that his muse's fire was damped by the suspicions

Ye hills, ye plains, ye forests, and ye caves,
Ye howling winds, and wintry-swelling waves!
Unheard, unseen, by human ear or eye,
Sad, to your sympathetic glooms I fly;
Where, to the whistling blast and waters' roar,
Pale Scotia's recent wound I may deplore.

O heavy loss, thy country ill could bear!
A loss these evil days can ne'er repair!
Justice, the high vicegerent of her God,
Her doubtful balance ey'd, and sway'd her rod;
Hearing the tidings of the fatal blow,
She sunk, abandon'd to the wildest woe.

Wrongs, injuries, from many a darksome den,
Now gay in hope explore the paths of men:
See, from his cavern, grim Oppression rise,
And throw on Poverty his cruel eyes;
Keen on the helpless victim see him fly,
And stifle, dark, the feebly-bursting cry.

Mark ruffian Violence, distained with crimes,
Rousing elate in these degenerate times;
View unsuspecting Innocence a prey,
As guileful Fraud points out the erring way:
While subtle Litigation's pliant tongue
The life-blood equal sucks of Right and Wrong:
Hark! injur'd Want recounts th' unlisten'd tale,
And much-wrong'd Mis'ry pours th' unpitied wail.

Ye dark waste hills, and brown unsightly plains,
To you I sing my grief-inspirèd strains:
Ye tempests, rage! ye turbid torrents, roll!
Ye suit the joyless tenor of my soul.
Life's social haunts and pleasures I resign,
Be nameless wilds and lonely wanderings mine,
To mourn the woes my country must endure,
That wound degenerate ages cannot cure.

always created by the wailings of the rhyming tribe over the ashes of the great. He never forgot, and resented keenly till the close of his life, the silence of the lord advocate. In a letter to Alexander Cunningham, 11th March, 1791, he writes:—"Highly as I respect the talents of their family, I never see the name *Dundas* in the column of a newspaper, but my heart seems straitened for room in my bosom; and if I am obliged to read aloud a paragraph relating to one of them, I feel my forehead flush, and my nether lip quiver." In January, 1796, when a Tory majority ousted the Honourable Henry Erskine from the post of Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and elected in his place the lord advocate, Robert Dundas, Burns soothed his injured *amour propre* of eight years' standing by giving "pious Bob" a sample of his art in a set of vigorous verses. See the "Dean of Faculty, a Ballad," in vol. iii.

BIRTHDAY ODE

FOR 31ST DECEMBER, 1787.[1]

Afar the illustrious exile roams,
Whom kingdoms on this day should hail;
An inmate in the casual shed,
On transient pity's bounty fed,
Haunted by busy memory's bitter tale!
Beasts of the forest have their savage homes,
But He, who should imperial purple wear,
Owns not the lap of earth where rests his royal head!
His wretched refuge, dark despair,
While ravening wrongs and woes pursue,
And distant far the faithful few
Who would his sorrows share.

False flatterer, Hope, away!
Nor think to lure us as in days of yore.
We solemnize this sorrowing natal day,
To prove our loyal truth—we can no more,
And owning Heaven's mysterious sway,
Submissive, low adore.
Ye honoured mighty Dead,
Who nobly perished in the glorious cause,
Your King, your Country, and her laws,
From great DUNDEE, who smiling Victory led,
And fell a Martyr in her arms,
(What breast of northern ice but warms!)
To bold BALMERINO'S undying name,
Whose soul of fire, lighted at Heaven's high flame,
Deserves the proudest wreath departed heroes claim:
Not unrevenged your fate shall lie,
It only lags, the fatal hour,
Your blood shall, with incessant cry,
Awake at last th' unsparing Power;
As from the cliff, with thundering course,
The snowy ruin smokes along
With doubling speed and gathering force,

[1] It appears that a select club of Jacobites were in the practice of meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of Prince Charles, the Young Pretender (born at Rome, 31st December, 1720), and that Burns had been requested to write a birthday ode for the year 1787. In reply the bard sent them the above spasmodic effusion. Dr. Currie published only the second of the three sections of the ode, breaking off abruptly at the word "Vengeance" in the fourth last line, excusing himself from giving the whole production on account of its want of originality, a considerable part of it, he considered, being rant. The poem was transcribed by its author into the Glenriddell Collection, now in the library of the Liverpool Athenæum. Burns's Jacobitism, it is well known, was of a merely sentimental romantic kind. It may be mentioned that Robert Chambers assigns 1786 as the date of the composition of this poem; Currie is the authority for the year later. The prince died at Florence exactly a month after the birthday thus celebrated.

Till deep it, crushing, whelms the cottage in the vale;
So Vengeance' arm ensanguined, strong,
Shall with resistless might assail,
Usurping Brunswick's pride shall lay,
And STEWART'S wrongs and yours, with tenfold weight, repay.

PERDITION, baleful child of night!
Rise and revenge the injured right
Of STEWART'S royal race:
Lead on the unmuzzled hounds of hell,
Till all the frighted echoes tell
The blood-notes of the chase!
Full on the quarry point their view,
Full on the base usurping crew
The tools of faction, and the nation's curse!
Hark how the cry grows on the wind;
They leave the lagging gale behind,
Their savage fury, pitiless, they pour;
With murdering eyes already they devour;
See Brunswick spent, a wretched prey,
His life one poor despairing day
Where each avenging hour still ushers in a worse!
Such havock, howling all abroad
Their utter ruin bring;
The base apostates to their GOD,
Or rebels to their KING.

SONG—THE BONNIE LASS OF ALBANIE.[1]

TUNE—"*Mary weep no more for me.*"

My heart is wae, and unco wae, sad very
To think upon the raging sea
That roars between her gardens green
And the bonnie lass of Albanie.

[1] The above song is entered in Burns's Commonplace Book (first published complete in 1879) on pp. 28, 29 immediately following the song "Castle Gordon." It was originally published by Robert Chambers in 1852 from a "portion of a manuscript book in Burns's handwriting, which is now in the possession of Mr. B. Nightingale, London." Chambers's version differs in no essential respect from the above except that in stanza second "royal" is substituted for "noble." There is nothing to show exactly when the song was written, but from the date in the Common-place Book it may have been in 1788. We put it along with the above as being connected in subject.

"The bonnie lass of Albanie" was Charlotte Stuart, daughter of Prince Charles (the Young Pretender), and of Clementina Walkinshaw, with whom the prince had lived for many years, and to whom some believed he was married. The daughter was legitimized by the title of Duchess of Albany in 1784. The duchess lived in almost constant attention on her father, and died 14th November, 1789, less than two years after the grave had closed over the ruined prince. The "isle of high degree" (3rd stanza) is Bute; the "town of fame" is Rothesay (the county town), which gave the title of Duke of Rothesay to the eldest sons of the kings of Scotland, which title is still borne by the eldest son of the British sovereign. The "witless youth" (4th stanza) was the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., whose reputation even at the date this song was written was far from being spotless.

This lovely maid's of noble blood,
That rulèd Albion's kingdoms three;
But oh, alas! for her bonnie face!
They hae wrang'd the lass of Albanie.

In the rolling tide of smiling Clyde,
There sits an isle of high degree;
And a town of fame whose princely name
Should grace the lass of Albanie.

But there's a youth, a witless youth,
That fills the place where she should be;
We'll send him o'er to his native shore,
And bring our ain sweet Albanie.

Alas the day, and woe the day,
A false usurper wan the gree, gained superiority
That now commands the towers and lands
The royal right of Albanie.

We'll daily pray, we'll nightly pray,
On bended knee most ferventlie,
That the time may come, with pipe and drum,
We'll welcome home fair Albanie.

SYLVANDER TO CLARINDA.

EXTEMPORE REPLY TO VERSES ADDRESSED TO THE AUTHOR BY A LADY UNDER THE SIGNATURE OF CLARINDA.[1]

27th December, 1787.

When dear Clarinda, matchless fair,
First struck Sylvander's raptured view,
He gazed, he listened to despair,
Alas! 'twas all he dared to do.

Love, from Clarinda's heavenly eyes,
Transfixed his bosom thro' and thro';
But still in Friendship's guarded guise,
For more the demon feared to do.

That heart already more than lost,
The imp beleaguered all *perdue;*
For frowning Honour kept his post—
To melt that frown he shrunk to do.

[1] For information regarding Mrs. M'Lehose who corresponded with him under the name of Clarinda, while he took that of Sylvander, see biographical sketch in vol. i. In a letter dated 20th December, 1787, to this lady, with whom he had but recently become acquainted, Burns says: "I have written you this scrawl because I have nothing else to do." Fastening on this phrase the witty lady dashed off and sent him some verses commencing:

When first you saw Clarinda's charms,
What rapture in your bosom grew!
Her heart was shut to Love's alarms,
But then—you'd nothing else to do, &c.

His reply was the extempore effusion in the text.

His pangs the Bard refused to own,
  Tho' half he wished Clarinda knew;
But Anguish wrung th' unweeting groan—
  Who blames what frantic Pain must do?

That heart, where motley follies blend,
  Was sternly still to Honour true
To prove Clarinda's fondest friend,
  Was what a lover sure might do.

The Muse his ready quill employed,
  No nearer bliss he could pursue;
That bliss Clarinda cold deny'd—
  "Send word by Charles how you do!"

The chill behest disarmed his muse,
  Till passion all impatient grew:
He wrote, and hinted for excuse,
  'Twas 'cause "he'd nothing else to do."

But by those hopes I have above!
  And by those faults I dearly rue!
The deed, the boldest mark of love,
  For thee, that deed I dare to do!

O could the Fates but name the price
  Would bless me with your charms and you!
With frantic joy I'd pay it thrice,
  If human art and power could do!

Then take, Clarinda, friendship's hand,
  (Friendship, at least, I may avow;)
And lay no more your chill command,—
  I'll write whatever I've to do.

TO CLARINDA.

ON THE POET'S LEAVING EDINBURGH.

These verses, written before the end of January, 1788, appeared in the second volume of Johnson's *Museum*, published the same year, along with music set to them by Mr. J. G. C. Schetki, a German violoncellist of some note, with whom Burns had formed an acquaintance. In a note to Clarinda he writes:—"I have been with Mr. Schetki, the musician, and he has set the song finely." In another note to the same lady he says: "I have called the song 'Clarinda.' I have carried it about in my pocket and hummed it over all day." Despite, however, the beauty of the words, and Burns's satisfaction with the setting, the melody never became popular.

Clarinda, mistress of my soul,
  The measur'd time is run!
The wretch beneath the dreary pole,
  So marks his latest sun.

To what dark cave of frozen night
  Shall poor Sylvander hie;
Depriv'd of thee, his life and light,
  The sun of all his joy.

We part—but by these precious drops
  That fill thy lovely eyes!
No other light shall guide my steps
  Till thy bright beams arise.

She, the fair sun of all her sex,
  Has blest my glorious day:
And shall a glimmering planet fix
  My worship to its ray?[1]

SONG—I AM MY MAMMIE'S AE BAIRN.

TUNE—"*I'm o'er young to marry yet.*"

Of this song, the 107th in Johnson's *Museum*, Burns says: "The chorus of this song is old, the rest of it, such as it is, is mine."

I am my mammy's ae bairn,	one
Wi' unco folk I weary, Sir;	strange
And lying in a man's bed,	
I'm fley'd it mak me eerie, Sir.	afraid timorous
I'm o'er young, I'm o'er young,	
I'm o'er young to marry yet;	
I'm o'er young—'twad be a sin	
To tak' me frae my mammy yet.	from
Hallowmas is come and gane,	
The nights are lang in winter, Sir;	
And you and I in ae bed,	one
In trowth, I darena venture, Sir.	truth
I'm o'er young, &c.	
Fu' loud and shill the frosty wind	shrill
Blaws thro' the leafless timmer, Sir;	timber (or trees)
But if ye come this gate again,	way
I'll aulder be gin simmer, Sir.	ere
I'm o'er young, &c.	

[1] The poet did not leave Edinburgh for a short time after this poem was written, his departure taking place on the 18th February. In April following he made Jean Armour his wife, "glimmering planet" as at this time no doubt she appeared to him in comparison with his sun Clarinda.

SONG—TO THE WEAVER'S GIN YE GO.

TUNE—"*To the weaver's gin ye go.*"

"The chorus of this song," writes Burns to Johnson, "is old. Here let me once for all apologize for many silly compositions of mine in this work. Many of the beautiful airs wanted words. In the hurry of other avocations, if I could string a parcel of rhymes together anything near tolerable, I was fain to let them pass. He must be an excellent poet whose every performance is excellent."

My heart was ance as blythe and free — once
As simmer days were lang,
But a bonnie, westlin weaver lad — west-country
Has gart me change my sang. — made
To the weaver's gin ye go, fair maids, — if
To the weaver's gin ye go;
I rede you right, gang ne'er at night, — advise
To the weaver's gin ye go.

My mither sent me to the town,
To warp a plaiden wab; — twilled flannel
But the weary, weary warpin' o't
Has gart me sigh and sab. — made
To the weaver's, &c.

A bonnie westlin weaver lad, — west-country
Sat working at his loom;
He took my heart as wi' a net,
In every knot and thrum.
To the weaver's, &c.

I sat beside my warpin'-wheel,
And aye I ca'd it roun'; — drove
But every shot and every knock,
My heart it gae a stoun. — gave painful throb
To the weaver's, &c.

The moon was sinking in the west
Wi' visage pale and wan,
As my bonnie westlin weaver lad — west-country
Convoy'd me thro' the glen.
To the weaver's, &c.

But what was said, or what was done,
Shame fa' me gin I tell; — befall if
But, oh! I fear the kintra soon — country
Will ken as weel's mysel'.[1] — know
To the weaver's, &c.

[1] The fancied singer of the above verses has been identified with Jean Armour, who, to avoid the pressure of her father's displeasure, went in March, 1786, to Paisley, where she resumed acquaintanceship with a townsman of hers, Robert Wilson, a handsome young weaver. Wilson's frequent visits to Jean formed the subject of some scandalous reports which reached the poet's ears.

SONG—MACPHERSON'S FAREWELL.[1]

TUNE—"*Macpherson's Rant.*"

Farewell, ye dungeons dark and strong,
The wretch's destinie!
Macpherson's time will not be long,
On yonder gallows-tree.
Sae rantingly, sae wantonly, swaggeringly
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He play'd a spring, and danc'd it round, lively tune
Below the gallows-tree.

O what is death but parting breath?—
On mony a bloody plain
I've dar'd his face, and in this place
I scorn him yet again!
Sae rantingly, &c.

[1] This song of Burns's was founded on one that was in existence long before his time, and was known as "Macpherson's Lament" (or "Farewell"). The hero was a notorious freebooter of the name who was hanged at Banff at the very end of the seventeenth century. Tradition has it (but no doubt the story is a mere myth) that, as Sir Walter Scott tells, "When he came to the fatal tree, he played the tune, to which he has bequeathed his name, upon a favourite violin, and holding up the instrument, offered it to any one of his clan who would undertake to play the tune over his body, at his lyke-wake; as none answered, he dashed it to pieces on the executioner's head, and flung himself from the ladder." The "Lament" referred to was popularly believed to have been composed by the freebooter in prison while he was under sentence of death, to the stirring air (=rant) which bears his name, and the first stanza and chorus, according to one version, are as follows:—

I've spent my time in rioting,
Debauched my health and strength;
I squandered fast as pillage came,
And fell to shame at length.
But dauntonly, and wantonly,
And rantonly I'll gae;
I'll play a tune, and dance it roun',
Beneath the gallows-tree.

The records of Macpherson's trial are still extant, and have been published. He was tried at Banff, along with three others, and convicted of being "repute an Egyptian and vagabond, and oppressor of his majesty's free lieges, in a bangstrie [violent] manner, and going up and down the country armed, and keeping markets in a hostile manner," and was sentenced to be executed at the cross of Banff, November 16, 1700, eight days after his conviction. One story asserted that the magistrates hurried on the execution early in the morning, and that Macpherson suffered several hours before the specified time. The motive for this indecent haste is said to have been a desire to defeat a reprieve, then on the way. An anonymous article in the first volume of the *New Monthly Magazine* supplies some particulars of his lineage and exploits. "James Macpherson was born of a beautiful gypsy who, at a great wedding, attracted the notice of a half-intoxicated Highland gentleman. He acknowledged the child, and had him reared in his house, until he lost his life in bravely pursuing a hostile clan, to recover a *spreath* of cattle taken from Badenoch. The gypsy woman hearing of this disaster in her rambles, the following summer came and took away her boy, but she often returned with him, to wait upon his relations and clansmen, who never failed to clothe him well, besides giving money to his mother. He grew up in beauty, strength, and stature rarely equalled. His sword is still preserved . . . and few men of our day could carry, far less wield it as a weapon of war; and if it must be owned that his prowess was debased by the exploits of a freebooter, it is certain no act of cruelty, no robbery of the widow, the fatherless, or the distressed, and no murder, was ever perpetrated under his command."

Details of the trial, with other information, are given in the section on Banffshire in *The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, and the subject is also dealt with in Cramond's *Annals of Banff*, vol. i. (1891). Regarding the sword Dr. Cramond remarks: "A fine specimen of a two-handed sword, now in the possession of the Duke of Fife, has appeared at several exhibitions of recent years as the veritable sword of Macpherson, but it is to be regretted that so little evidence thereof has ever been forthcoming. . . . By Macpherson's time more serviceable weapons were come into ordinary use than two-handed swords. The sword is a formidable and rather unwieldy weapon, above 5 ft. in length, the blade being 3 ft. 3¾ in. long." The same authority expresses himself as follows regarding the old song: "No one looking dispassionately at these verses will assert they were written by Macpherson. They were written, to all appearance, a few years after the event, when the details were somewhat forgotten, by some schoolmaster, or someone who had imbibed a little learning. The general character of the composition, besides particular expressions, proves this."

Untie these bands from off my hands,
And bring to me my sword;
And there's no a man, in all Scotland,
But I'll brave him at a word.
Sae rantingly, &c.

I've liv'd a life of sturt and strife; turbulence
I die by treacherie:
It burns my heart I must depart
And not avenged be.
Sae rantingly, &c.

Now farewell, light,—thou sunshine bright,
And all beneath the sky!
May coward shame distain his name,
The wretch that dare not die!
Sae rantingly, &c.

SONG—STAY, MY CHARMER, CAN YOU LEAVE ME.[1]

TUNE—"*An Gille dubh ciar-dhubh.*"

Stay, my charmer, can you leave me?
Cruel, cruel to deceive me!
Well you know how much you grieve me;
Cruel charmer, can you go?
Cruel charmer, can you go?

By my love so ill requited;
By the faith you fondly plighted;
By the pangs of lovers slighted:
Do not, do not leave me so!
Do not, do not leave me so!

SONG—MY HOGGIE.[3]

TUNE—"*O what will I do gin my Hoggie die.*"

What will I do gin my Hoggie die? if little sheep
My joy, my pride, my Hoggie!
My only beast, I had nae mae, no more
And vow but[2] I was vogie! proud

[1] This song was written to be sung to the simple and pathetic air known to the Sassenach as "The Black Haired Lad." It was a favourite melody of Burns's, who had a set of it transmitted to him from the Highlands.

[2] *Vow but* has here the meaning of indeed, in truth, let me tell you.

[3] This song is perhaps but an improved version of an old ditty. Stenhouse, however, expressly asserts that it was composed by Burns "as appears from the

The lee-lang night we watch'd the fauld, live-long fold
Me and my faithfu' doggie;
We heard nought but the roaring linn, cataract
Amang the braes sae scroggie; slopes bushy

But the houlet cried frae the castle wa', owl from
The blitter frae the boggie, snipe (or bittern) bog
The tod replied upon the hill, fox
I trembled for my Hoggie.

When day did daw, and cocks did craw, dawn
The morning it was foggy;
An unco tyke lap o'er the dyke, strange dog leaped wall
And maist has kill'd my Hoggie. almost

RAVING WINDS AROUND HER BLOWING.

TUNE—"*Macgregor of Ruara's Lament.*"

Burns says of this song: "I composed these verses on Miss Isabella M'Leod[1] of Raza [Rasay or Raasay], alluding to her feelings on the death of her sister, and the still more melancholy death of her sister's husband, the Earl of Loudoun, who shot himself out of sheer heartbreak at some mortifications he suffered owing to the deranged state of his finances."

Raving winds around her blowing,
Yellow leaves the woodlands strowing,
By a river hoarsely roaring,
Isabella stray'd deploring—
"Farewell, hours that late did measure
Sunshine days of joy and pleasure;
Hail, thou gloomy night of sorrow,
Cheerless night that knows no morrow!

MS. in his own handwriting now before me"—by no means very conclusive evidence. Cromek in introducing this effusion into his *Select Scottish Songs* (1810) criticises it thus:—"It is a silly subject treated sublimely. It has much of the fervour of the 'Vision.'" (!) *Hog*, of which *hoggie* is the diminutive, means a young sheep before it is first shorn. Concerning the air, Burns's friend, Mr. Robert Riddell, told an anecdote on the authority of Dr. Walker, Professor of Natural History in the University of Edinburgh. Dr. Walker, it seems, said that some gentlemen, riding through Dumfriesshire, stopped at a hamlet, consisting of a few houses, called Moss Plat (or Mosspaul), where they were struck with this tune, which an old woman, spinning with a distaff at her door, was singing. All she could tell concerning it was, that she picked it up when a child, and that it was called 'What will I do gin my Hoggie die.'" No person except a few females there knew this fine old tune, which in all probability would have been lost, had not one of the gentlemen, who happened to have a flute with him, taken it down.

[1] We have already spoken of this lady and her family. See note p. 82. We extract the following from a letter of the poet's to Mrs. Dunlop under date 16th August, 1788. "I was yesterday at Mr. Miller's [of Dalswinton House] to dinner for the first time. My reception was quite to my mind; from the lady of the house quite flattering. . . . In the course of conversation Johnson's *Musical Museum*, a collection of Scottish songs with the music, was talked of. We got a song on the harpsichord, beginning 'Raving Winds around her blowing.' The air was much admired: the lady of the house asked me whose were the words. 'Mine, madam—they are indeed my very best verses:' she took not the smallest notice of them! The Scottish proverb says well, 'King's caff is better than ither folks' corn.' I was going to make a New Testament quotation about 'casting pearls,' but that would be too virulent, for the lady is actually a woman of sense and taste."——Something may be said in the lady's defence. The song is not one of the poet's best, and the air to which it was set is rhythmically unsuitable.

"O'er the past too fondly wandering,
On the hopeless future pondering;
Chilly grief my life-blood freezes,
Fell despair my fancy seizes.
Life, thou soul of every blessing,
Load to mis'ry most distressing,
O how gladly I'd resign thee,
And to dark oblivion join thee!"

SONG—UP IN THE MORNING EARLY.[1]

TUNE—"*Cold blows the wind.*"

"The chorus of this song," says Burns, "is old; the two stanzas are mine."

Cauld blaws the wind frae east to west, from
The drift is driving sairly; sorely
Sae loud and shrill I hear the blast,
I'm sure it's winter fairly.
Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early:
When a' the hills are covered wi' snaw
I'm sure it's winter fairly.

The birds sit chittering in the thorn, shivering
A' day they fare but sparely;
And lang's the night frae e'en to morn,—
I'm sure it's winter fairly.
Up in the morning, &c.

SONG—HOW LONG AND DREARY IS THE NIGHT.[2]

FIRST SET.

How long and dreary is the night,
When I am frae my dearie! away from
I sleepless lie frae e'en to morn,
Tho' I were ne'er sae weary.
I sleepless lie frae e'en to morn,
Tho' I were ne'er sae weary.

[1] The air is one of the finest and oldest of Scottish melodies. From an anecdote given in Sir John Hawkins' *History of Music*, it appears to have been a favourite of Queen Mary's, the consort of William III., and Purcell the distinguished musician composed a birthday ode to the queen in which this tune, almost note for note, was made to serve as the bass part. Before this, however, John Hilton in 1625 published the tune as the third-voice part to what is called a Northern Catch for three voices, beginning "I'se gae with thee, sweet Peggy." The tune is also united to one of the songs of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. There is an excellent song of five double verses on the same subject and to the same air, by John Hamilton, a music-seller in Edinburgh (who died in 1814), which is popular over Scotland.

[2] This song was written by Burns in 1788 to a Gaelic melody which he picked up in the Highlands and sent to Johnson's *Museum*. In October, 1794, he altered it slightly and added a chorus to suit the air of "Cauld kail in Aberdeen" for Thomson's *Melodies of Scotland*.

When I think on the happy days
I spent wi' you, my dearie,
And now what lands between us lie,
How can I be but eerie![1] timorous
And now what lands between us lie,
How can I be but eerie!

How slow ye move, ye heavy hours,
As ye were wae and weary! woeful
It was na sae ye glinted by flashed
When I was wi' my dearie.
It was na sae ye glinted by
When I was wi' my dearie.

SONG—THERE WAS A LASS, THEY CA'D HER MEG.[2]

TUNE—"*Duncan Davison.*"

There was a lass, they ca'd her Meg, called
And she held o'er the moors to spin;
There was a lad that follow'd her,
They ca'd him Duncan Davison.
The moor was dreigh, and Meg was skeigh, wearisome disdainful
Her favour Duncan couldna win;
For wi' the rock she wad him knock, distaff would
And aye she shook the temper-pin.[3] always

As o'er the moor they lightly foor, proceeded
A burn was clear, a glen was green, brook
Upon the banks they eas'd their shanks
And aye she set the wheel between;
But Duncan swore a haly aith, holy oath
That Meg should be a bride the morn;
Then Meg took up her spinnin' graith, utensils
And flang them a' out o'er the burn.

We'll big a house—a wee, wee house, build
And we will live like king and queen,
Sae blythe and merry we will be
When ye set by the wheel at e'en.

[1] Nervous, or lonely and ill-at-ease, would perhaps best suit the context.

[2] The note by Stenhouse accompanying this lyric runs:—"This very humorous song was composed by Burns, although he did not openly choose to avow it. I have recovered his original manuscript copy of this song, which is the same as that inserted in the *Museum*." The tune ("Duncan Davison") to which the words are set is an old and still popular strathspey. The last four lines have no connection with the rest, and are probably borrowed from an old song. The present writer has heard one in which occur similar lines:

I can drink and no be drunk;
I can fight and no be slain;
An' I can kiss my neibor's wife,
An' aye come welcome to my ain.

[3] The wooden pin used for tempering or regulating the motion of the spinning-wheel.

A man may drink and no be drunk;
A man may fight and no be slain;
A man may kiss a bonnie lass,
And aye be welcome back again.

SONG—MUSING ON THE ROARING OCEAN.

TUNE—"*Druimion dubh.*"

"I composed these verses," says Burns, "out of compliment to a Mrs. M'Lachlan, whose husband is an officer in the East Indies."

Musing on the roaring ocean,
Which divides my love and me;
Wearying heaven, in warm devotion,
For his weal, where'er he be.

Hope and fear's alternate billow
Yielding late to nature's law;
Whisp'ring spirits round my pillow
Talk of him that's far awa.

Ye whom sorrow never wounded,
Ye who never shed a tear,
Care-untroubled, joy-surrounded,
Gaudy day to you is dear.

Gentle night, do thou befriend me;
Downy sleep, the curtain draw;
Spirits kind, again attend me,
Talk of him that's far awa!

SONG—TO DAUNTON ME.

TUNE—"*To daunton me*" (otherwise known as "*Thee, Johnie Lad*").

The blude-red rose at Yule may blaw,
The simmer lilies bloom in snaw,
The frost may freeze the deepest sea;
But an auld man shall never daunton me. subdue
To daunton me, and me so young,
Wi' his fause heart and flattering tongue,
That is the thing you ne'er shall see;
For an auld man shall never daunton me.

For a' his meal and a' his maut, malt
For a' his fresh beef and his saut, salt
For a' his gold and white monie,
An auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

His gear may buy him kye and yowes, wealth cows ewes
His gear may buy him glens and knowes; knolls
But me he shall not buy nor fee, hire
For an auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.

He hirples twa-fauld as he dow, limps bent double can
Wi' his teethless gab and his auld beld pow, mouth bald head
An' the rain rains down frae his red blear'd ee — eye
That auld man shall never daunton me.
To daunton me, &c.[1]

TO CLARINDA.

WITH A PRESENT OF A PAIR OF DRINKING GLASSES.

Fair Empress of the Poet's soul,
And Queen of Poetesses;
Clarinda, take this little boon,
This humble pair of glasses,—

And fill them high with generous juice,
As generous as your mind;
And pledge me in the generous toast—
"The whole of human kind!"

"To those who love us!"—second fill;
But not to those whom we love;
Lest we love those who love not us!
A third—"to thee and me, love!"

SONG—THE BONNIE LAD THAT'S FAR AWA'.[2]

TUNE—"*The bonnie lad that's far awa'.*"

O how can I be blythe and glad,
Or how can I gang brisk and braw, finely dressed
When the bonnie lad that I lo'e best,
Is o'er the hills and far awa'?

[1] The old songs sung to the air "To daunton me" are Jacobitical. The air is found in Oswald's collection, 1740.

[2] "This little lamentation of a desolate damsel," says Jeffrey, "is tender and pretty." Herd's *Collection* supplies the germ of this song, in which it is supposed the poet has contrived to speak the feelings of Jean Armour, when the sternness of her father obliged her to leave home for the second time, and seek shelter under the roof of William Muir, the honest miller of Tarbolton, owing to the result of her renewed intimacy with Burns. This, according to Chambers, was "in the middle of winter" (1787–88). In the month of March following she gave birth to twin daughters, who died in a few days. See particulars given in biographical sketch.

It's no the frosty winter wind,
  It's no the driving drift and snaw;
But ayc the tear comes in my ee, eye
  To think on him that's far awa'.

My father pat me frae his door, put from
  My friends they hae disown'd me a', have
But I hae ane will tak my part, one
  The bonnie lad that's far awa'.

A pair o' gloves he gave to me,
  And silken snoods he gave me twa; hair-bands
And I will wear them for his sake,
  The bonnie lad that's far awa'.

The weary winter soon will pass,
  And spring will cleed the birken shaw; clothe birch wood
And my sweet babie will be born,
  And he'll come hame that's far awa'.

SONG—THE CHEVALIER'S LAMENT.[1]

TUNE—"*Captain O'Kean.*"

"Yesterday," says Burns in a letter to Robert Cleghorn, dated 31st March, 1788, "as I was riding through a tract of melancholy, joyless muirs, between Galloway and Ayrshire, it being Sunday, I turned my thoughts to psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and your favourite air, 'Captain O'Kean,' coming at length into my head, I tried these words to it. . . . I am tolerably pleased with these verses, but as I have only a sketch of the tune, I leave it with you to try if they suit the measure of the music."

The small birds rejoice in the green leaves returning,
  The murmuring streamlet winds clear through the vale;
The hawthorn trees(1) blow in the dews of the morning,
  And wild scattered cowslips bedeck the green vale;
But what can give pleasure, or what can seem fair,
While(2) the lingering moments are number'd by Care?
  No flowers gaily springing, nor birds sweetly singing,(3)
Can soothe the sad bosom of joyless despair.

The deed that I dar'd, could it merit their malice,
  A KING and a FATHER to place on his throne?
His right are these hills, and his right are these valleys,
  Where the(4) wild beasts find shelter, but I can find none.

[1] The letter quoted in the head-note inclosed the first eight lines of the "Chevalier's Lament." Cleghorn replied that he was delighted with the words, and that they suited the tune to a hair; adding that he would like a verse or two more, and suggesting that they should be in the Jacobite style. "Suppose," says he, "it should be sung after the fatal field of Culloden, by the unfortunate Charles." Burns took the hint; he added a second stanza, infusing into the lines the strong Jacobitical spirit which his friends desiderated. Culloden was fought April 16th, 1746; Prince Charles escaped to France in September.

But 'tis not my sufferings, thus wretched, forlorn,
My brave gallant friends, 'tis your ruin I mourn:
Your deeds(5) prov'd so loyal, in hot bloody trial,—
Alas! can I make you(6) no sweeter return![1]

SONG—OF A' THE AIRTS THE WIND CAN BLAW.[2]

TUNE—"*Miss Admiral Gordon's Strathspey.*"

"The air is by Marshall. The song I composed out of compliment to Mrs. Burns. N.B.—It was during the honeymoon."—BURNS.

Of a' the airts the wind can blaw, directions
I dearly like the west,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There's[3] wild woods grow, and rivers row, roll
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:

[1] The Edinburgh Common-place Book has the following different readings: (1) *primroses* for *hawthorn trees;* (2) *when* for *while;* (3) *No birds sweetly singing, nor flowers gaily springing*—a transposition merely; (4) *the* is struck out; (5) *faith* for *deeds;* (6) *it* for *you.* The song was first published in Thomson's *Collection,* vol. ii. (July 1799).

[2] "As precious a love-offering, as genius in the passion of hope ever laid in a virgin's bosom."—PROFESSOR WILSON.

The "honeymoon" (June, 1788) alluded to in the head-note was mostly passed by Burns in a miserable hovel at Ellisland, while he was occupied in building his new farmhouse. He found time, however, to spend a few days now and again with his "Jean" at Mossgiel, where she had gone to reside for a while with the poet's family.

We have given the song as it appears in Johnson's *Museum.* In Wood's *Songs of Scotland* and other collections the last four lines of the first stanza read:

Though wild woods grow and rivers row
And mony a hill between;
Baith day and night, &c.

Stanza second is made to run thus:

I see her in the dewy flower
Sae lovely, sweet and fair;
I hear her voice in ilka bird
Wi' music charm the air.

We are not aware that there is any authority for the altered readings. In many collections of Scottish songs the following stanzas are appended to this beautiful lyric.

O blaw, ye westlin winds, blaw saft western
Amang the leafy trees;
Wi' gentle gale, frae muir and dale, from
Bring hame the laden bees;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean:
Ae smile o' her wad banish care, one would
Sae lovely is my Jean.

What sighs and vows, amang the knowes, knolls
Hae past atween us twa!
How fain to meet, how wae to part, sorry
That day she gaed awa! went
The powers aboon can only ken, above know
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be so dear to me none
As my sweet lovely Jean.

Their author was John Hamilton, a music-seller in Edinburgh about the beginning of the century. They by no means disgrace their companion verses and are often sung along with them; but they do not exactly suit the facts of the case. Burns's song being written at Ellisland, he could hardly have spoken of Jean going away and coming back to that place, since she had never yet seen it. Two additional stanzas written by William Reid, bookseller, Glasgow, in the same measure and in praise of a "bonnie Jean" are sometimes printed in Scottish song-books in connection with this lyric, but they are much inferior to the foregoing.——The air was partly composed by William Marshall, butler to the Duke of Gordon, by adding a second strain to an old melody called the "Lowlands of Holland."

[3] That is "there are wild woods *that* grow, and rivers *that* roll, and also many a hill between us." Such omissions of the relative are common. The use of the singular form in "there's" is in keeping with the Scotch and Northern English dialect.

I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
  I hear her charm the air:
There's not a bonnie flower that springs,
  By fountain, shaw, or green, — wood
There's not a bonnie bird that sings,
  But minds me o' my Jean. — reminds

EPISTLE TO HUGH PARKER, MERCHANT, KILMARNOCK.[1]

June, 1788.

In this strange land, this uncouth clime,
A land unknown to prose or rhyme;
Where words ne'er crost the Muse's heckles,[2]
Nor limpet in poetic shackles;
A land that Prose did never view it,
Except when drunk he stacher't thro' it; — staggered
Here, ambush'd by the chimla cheek, — chimney-corner
Hid in an atmosphere of reek, — smoke
I hear a wheel thrum i' the neuk, — whirr corner
I hear it—for in vain I leuk.—
The red peat gleams, a fiery kernel,
Enhuskèd by a fog infernal:
Here, for my wonted rhyming raptures,
I sit and count my sins by chapters;
For life and spunk like ither Christians, — spirit other
I'm dwindled down to mere existence;
Wi' nae converse but Gallowa' bodies,[3] — folks
Wi' nae kenn'd face but Jenny Geddes.[4] — known
Jenny, my Pegasean pride!
Dowie she saunters down Nithside, — sad
And aye a westlin' leuk[5] she throws, — westward look
While tears hap o'er her auld brown nose! — hop
Was it for this, wi' canny care, — provident
Thou bure the Bard through many a shire? — bore
At howes or hillocks never stumbled, — hollows
And late or early never grumbled?—

[1] Hugh Parker was a brother of William Parker, banker, Kilmarnock, an old friend of the poet, to whom the song—

Ye sons of old Killie, assembled by Willie,

refers. Hugh Parker is referred to only once in the Correspondence. In a letter to Mr. Robert Muir, Kilmarnock, written from Stirling on 26th August, 1787, Burns says, "I hope Hughoc is going on and prospering with God and Miss M'Causlin." The epistle in the text was found among Parker's papers at his death.

[2] *Heckles.* An apparatus consisting of a series of long metallic teeth, through which hemp, flax, &c., are drawn, so as to comb the fibres out straight, and fit them for the subsequent operations. The propriety of the use of the term here is obvious.

[3] Ellisland is close to the eastern border of the stewartry (or county) of Kirkcudbright, one of the divisions of the district called Galloway, Wigtownshire being the other.

[4] His old mare.

[5] A look westward, that is Ayrshire-ward, Ayrshire being north-*west* of Ellisland. Jean, now Mrs. Burns, was still at Mauchline, since he had not as yet a house to put her into. This epistle was written in June, 1788, from the hovel in which he was temporarily residing, and it was the end of November before he had accommodation for his wife and household.

O, had I power like inclination,
I'd heeze thee up a constellation, hoist
To canter with the Sagitarre,
Or loup the ecliptic like a bar; leap
Or turn the pole like any arrow;
Or, when auld Phœbus bids good-morrow,
Down the zodiac urge the race,
And cast dirt on his godship's face;
For I could lay my bread and kail broth
He'd ne'er cast saut upo' thy tail.— salt
Wi' a' this care and a' this grief,
And sma', sma' prospect of relief,
And nought but peat-reek i' my head,
How can I write what ye can read?—
Tarbolton, twenty-fourth o' June,
Ye'll find me in a better tune;
But till we meet and weet our whistle, wet
Tak this excuse for nae epistle.

ROBERT BURNS.

SONG—O, WERE I ON PARNASSUS' HILL.[1]

TUNE—"*My love is lost to me.*"

O, were I on Parnassus' hill!
Or had of Helicon my fill,
That I might catch poetic skill,
To sing how dear I love thee.
But Nith maun be my muse's well, must
My muse maun be thy bonnie sel';
On Corsincon[2] I'll glow'r, and spell stare
And write how dear I love thee.

Then come, sweet muse, inspire my lay!
For a' the lee-lang simmer's day, live-long
I couldna sing, I couldna say,
How much, how dear I love thee.
I see thee dancing o'er the green,
Thy waist sae jimp, thy limbs sae clean, slim
Thy tempting lips—thy roguish een— eyes
By heaven and earth, I love thee!

By night, by day, a-field, at hame,
The thoughts o' thee my breast inflame;
And aye I muse and sing thy name,
I only live to love thee.

[1] This song was composed in honour of Mrs. Burns during the poet's first weeks' residence at Ellisland. ——The plaintive melody "My love is lost to me" is a composition of Oswald's and was published in his *Caledonian Pocket Companion.*

[2] Corsincon or Corsancone is a lofty conical hill (height 1547 feet) in New Cumnock parish, Ayrshire, about 25 miles from Burns's farm, Ellisland. Near the foot of it the river Nith crosses from Ayrshire into Dumfriesshire.

Tho' I were doom'd to wander on,
Beyond the sea, beyond the sun,
Till my last weary sand was run;
Till then—and then I love thee.

SONG—NAEBODY.[1]

TUNE—"*Naebody.*"

I hae a wife o' my ain— own
I'll partake wi' naebody;
I'll tak cuckold frae nane, from none
I'll gie cuckold to naebody.
I hae a penny to spend,
There—thanks to naebody;
I hae naething to lend,
I'll borrow frae naebody.

I am naebody's lord—
I'll be slave to naebody;
I hae a guid braid sword, broad
I'll tak dunts frae naebody. blows
I'll be merry and free,
I'll be sad for naebody;
If naebody care for me,
I'll care for naebody.

SONG—LOUIS, WHAT RECK I BY THEE.[2]

TUNE—"*Louis, what reck I by thee?*"

Louis, what reck I by thee,
Or Geordie on his ocean?
Dyvor, beggar louns to me,— bankrupt fellows
I reign in Jeanie's bosom.

Let her crown my love her law,
And in her breast enthrone me:
Kings and nations,—swith awa'! quickly
Reif randies, I disown ye! thieving vagabonds

[1] The above verses were written shortly after the poet's marriage, and are characterized by Lockhart as a welcome to his wife under her roof-tree at Ellisland. "At this period," says Dr. Currie, "sentiments of independence buoyed up his mind, pictures of domestic content and peace rose on his imagination, and a few days passed away, as he himself informs us, the most tranquil, if not the happiest, he had ever experienced." In this situation he expressed his feelings in the above vigorous verses. They are formed on the model of an old lyric beginning:—

I hae a wife o' my ain,
I'll be hadden to naebody; beholden
I hae a pat and a pan, pot
I'll borrow frae naebody.

They were sent to Johnson's *Museum*, where they appeared set to a sprightly air taken from Oswald's *Pocket Companion*.

[2] This song, rather bald and abrupt in style, was written probably about the date of the poet's marriage, and appeared first in the fifth volume of the *Museum*. "Jeanie," of course, is Mrs. Burns.

TO ALEXANDER CUNNINGHAM, ESQ., WRITER, EDINBURGH.

ELLISLAND, NITHSDALE, July 27th, 1788.

My god-like friend—nay, do not stare,
You think the phrase is odd-like;
But "God is Love" the saints declare,
Then surely thou art god-like.

And is thy ardour still the same?
And kindled still at Anna?
Others may boast a partial flame,
But thou art a volcano!

Ev'n Wedlock asks not love beyond
Death's tie-dissolving portal;
But thou omnipotently fond,
May'st promise love immortal.

Thy wounds such healing powers defy,
Such symptoms dire attend them,
That last great antihectic try—
Marriage perhaps may mend them.

Sweet Anna has an air—a grace
Divine, magnetic, touching;
She talks, she charms—but who can trace
The process of bewitching?[1]

SONG—"ANNA, THY CHARMS."

TUNE—"*Bonnie Mary.*"

Anna, thy charms my bosom fire,
And waste my soul with care;
But ah! how bootless to admire,
When fated to despair!
Yet in thy presence, lovely Fair,
To hope may be forgiv'n;
For sure 'twere impious to despair,
So much in sight of Heav'n.[2]

[1] The above lines form part of an epistle telling Cunningham of his marriage and his starting as a farmer at Ellisland. —— The Anna (a celebrated beauty, daughter of John Stewart, Esq., of East Craigs) alluded to as Cunningham's adored one, jilted him and became the wife of Mr. Forrest Dewar, surgeon, and subsequently a town-councillor of Edinburgh. Cunningham felt the lady's deceit very deeply, and was greatly sympathized with by his friend the poet, who composed the songs "She's fair and fause," "Had I a cave," and "Now Spring has clad," in reference to this incident. See note to last-mentioned song.

[2] Mr. Scott Douglas in his Edinburgh Edition of Burns suggests that this brief epigrammatic song is "simply a vicarious effusion, intended to proceed from the lips of the author's forlorn friend [Alexander] Cunningham." In support of this he quotes from a hitherto unpublished letter the preceding stanzas, in which the poet banters his friend on his consuming love for Anna. See previous note.

EPISTLE TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY,[1]

REQUESTING A FAVOUR.

In a letter to Mr. Graham, written from Ellisland on 10th September, 1788, the following epistle was enclosed. Burns in his letter states that having got his excise commission, which he regarded as his sheet-anchor in life, and his farm being certain to prove a ruinous concern by itself, he wished to be enabled to meet the responsibilities of his married life, and to extricate himself from his embarrassments by getting an appointment as officer in the district in which Ellisland was situated. Through Mr. Graham's influence he had obtained his commission to the excise in February of this year, and next year the favour now asked was granted, the poet being made officer in the district of his residence.

When Nature her great master-piece design'd,
And fram'd her last, best work, the human mind,
Her eye intent on all the mazy plan,
She form'd of various parts the various man.

Then first she calls the useful many forth;[2]
Plain plodding industry, and sober worth:
Thence peasants, farmers, native sons of earth,
And merchandise' whole genus take their birth,
Each prudent cit a warm existence finds,
And all mechanics' many-apron'd kinds.
Some other rarer sorts are wanted yet,
The lead and buoy are needful to the net;
The *caput mortuum* of gross desires
Makes a material for mere knights and squires;
The martial phosphorus is taught to flow;
She kneads the lumpish philosophic dough,
Then marks th' unyielding mass with grave designs—
Law, physics, politics, and deep divines:
Last, she sublimes th' Aurora of the poles,
The flashing elements of female souls.

The order'd system fair before her stood,
Nature, well pleas'd, pronounced it very good;
But e'er she gave creating labour o'er,
Half-jest, she tried one curious labour more.
Some spumy, fiery, *ignis fatuus* matter;
Such as the slightest breath of air might scatter;
With arch-alacrity and conscious glee
(Nature may have her whim as well as we,
Her Hogarth-art perhaps she meant to show it)
She forms the thing, and christens it—a Poet:

[1] "The first epistle to Graham of Fintry," says Currie, "is not equal to the second, but it contains too much of the characteristic vigour of its author to be suppressed."——It was an attempt to comply with the advice of many of his literary friends, viz.: to write in English so as to increase the circle of his readers and admirers. It is an imitation, or rather, as Burns himself says (in letter to Miss Chalmers of 16th September, 1788), "in the manner of" Pope's *Moral Epistles*, and "was," says Alexander Smith, "the poet's earliest attempt in the manner of Pope. It has its merits of course; but it lacks the fire, ease, and sweetness of his earlier epistles to Lapraik, Smith, and others."

[2] Variation in the holograph copy in the British Museum:—

The useful many, first she calls them forth.

Creature, tho' oft the prey of care and sorrow,
When blest to-day unmindful of to-morrow.
A being form'd t' amuse his graver friends,
Admir'd and prais'd—and there the homage[1] ends:
A mortal quite unfit for Fortune's strife,
Yet oft the sport of all the ills of life;
Prone to enjoy each pleasure riches give,
Yet haply wanting wherewithal to live:
Longing to wipe each tear, to heal each groan,
Yet frequent all unheeded in his own.

But honest Nature is not quite a Turk,
She laugh'd at first, then felt for her poor work.
Pitying[2] the propless climber of mankind,
She cast about a standard tree to find;
And, to support[3] his helpless woodbine state,
Attach'd him to the generous truly great,[4]
A title, and the only one I claim,
To lay strong hold for help on bounteous[5] Graham.

Pity the tuneful Muses' hapless[6] train,
Weak, timid landsmen on life's stormy main!
Their hearts no selfish stern absorbent stuff,
That never gives—tho' humbly takes enough;
The little fate allows, they share as soon,
Unlike sage, proverb'd Wisdom's hard-wrung boon.
The world were blest did bliss on them depend,
Ah, that 'the friendly e'er should want a friend!'
Let Prudence number o'er each sturdy son,
Who life and wisdom at one race begun,
Who feel by reason, and who give by rule,
(Instinct 's a brute, and sentiment a fool!)
Who make poor *will do* wait upon *I should*—
We own they're prudent, but who feels they're good?
Ye wise ones, hence! ye hurt the social eye!
God's image rudely etch'd on base alloy!
But come ye who the godlike pleasure know,
Heaven's attribute distinguish'd—to bestow!
Whose arms of love would grasp the human race:
Come thou who giv'st with all a courtier's grace;
FRIEND OF MY LIFE, true patron of my rhymes!
Prop of my dearest hopes for future times.
Why shrinks my soul half blushing, half afraid,
Backward, abash'd to ask thy friendly aid?
I know my need, I know thy giving hand,
I crave[7] thy friendship at thy kind command;
But there are such who court the tuneful Nine—
Heavens! should the branded character be mine!

[1] In British Museum MS. "wages." [2] MS. "viewing." [3] MS. "In pity for." [4] MS. "She clasp'd his tendrils round the truly great." [5] MS. "Generous." [6] MS. "Helpless." [7] MS. "Tax."

Whose verse in manhood's pride sublimely flows,
Yet vilest reptiles in their begging prose.
Mark, how their lofty independent spirit
Soars on the spurning wing of injur'd merit!
Seek not the proofs in private life to find;
Pity the best of words should be but wind!
So, to heaven's gates the lark's shrill song ascends,
But grovelling on the earth the carol ends.
In all the clam'rous cry of starving want,
They dun Benevolence with shameless front;
Oblige them, patronise their tinsel lays—
They persecute you all your future days!
Ere my poor soul such deep damnation stain,
My horny fist assume the plough again;
The piebald jacket let me patch once more;
On eighteen-pence a week I've liv'd before.
Though, thanks to Heaven, I dare even that last shift,
I trust meantime my boon is in thy gift:
That, plac'd by thee upon the wish'd-for height,
Where, man and nature fairer in her sight,
My Muse may imp her wing for some sublimer flight.

SONG—THE FÊTE CHAMPÊTRE.

TUNE—"*Killiecrankie.*"

"The occasion of this ballad was as follows:—When Mr. Cunninghame of Enterkin came to his estate, two mansion-houses upon it, Enterkin and Annbank, were both in a ruinous state. Wishing to introduce himself with some *éclat* to the county, in the autumn of 1788, he got temporary erections made on the banks of Ayr, tastefully decorated with shrubs and flowers, for a supper and ball, to which most of the respectable families in the county were invited. It was a novelty in the county, and attracted much notice. A dissolution of parliament was soon expected, and this festivity was thought to be an introduction to a canvass for representing the county. Several other candidates were spoken of, particularly Sir John Whitefoord, then residing at Cloncaird, commonly pronounced Glencaird, and Mr. Boswell, the well-known biographer of Dr. Johnson ('the meikle Ursa-Major'). The political views of this festive assemblage, which are alluded to in the ballad, if they ever existed, were laid aside, as Mr. Cunninghame did not canvass the county."—GILBERT BURNS.

O wha will to Saint Stephen's House,
To do our errands there, man?
O wha will to Saint Stephen's House,
O' th' merry lads o' Ayr, man?
Or will we send a man o' law?
Or will we send a sodger?
Or him wha led o'er Scotland a'
The meikle Ursa-Major?

Come, will ye court a noble lord,
Or buy a score o' lairds, man? squires
For worth and honour pawn their word,
Their vote shall be Glencaird's, man.

Ane gies them coin, ane gies them wine, one gives
Anither gies them clatter; talk
Annbank, wha guess'd the ladies' taste,
He gies a Fête Champêtre.

When Love and Beauty heard the news,
The gay green-woods amang, man;
Where gathering flowers and busking bowers dressing
They heard the blackbird's sang, man:
A vow, they seal'd it with a kiss,
Sir Politics to fetter,
As theirs alone, the patent-bliss,
To hold a Fête Champêtre.

Then mounted Mirth, on gleesome wing,
O'er hill and dale she flew, man;
Ilk wimpling burn, ilk crystal spring, each
Ilk glen and shaw she knew, man; wood
She summon'd every social sprite,
That sports by wood or water,
On th' bonnie banks o' Ayr to meet,
And keep this Fête Champêtre.

Cauld Boreas, wi' his boisterous crew,
Were bound to stakes like kye, man; cows
And Cynthia's car, o' silver fu',
Clamb up the starry sky, man; climbed
Reflected beams dwell in the streams,
Or down the current shatter:
The western breeze steals thro' the trees,
To view this Fête Champêtre.

How many a robe sae gaily floats!
What sparkling jewels glance, man!
To harmony's enchanting notes,
As moves the mazy dance, man.
The echoing wood, the winding flood,
Like Paradise did glitter,
When angels met, at Adam's yett, gate
To hold their Fête Champêtre.

When Politics came there, to mix
And make his ether-stane, man![1] adder-stone
He circled round the magic ground,
But entrance found he nane, man:
He blush'd for shame, he quat his name, renounced (quitted)
Forswore it, every letter,
Wi' humble prayer to join and share
This festive Fête Champêtre.

[1] Certain small annular stones with streaked colouring are called adder-stones, and were supposed by the superstitious to be produced by adders and to have magical powers.

SONG—THE DAY RETURNS, MY BOSOM BURNS.[1]

TUNE—"*Seventh of November.*"

"I composed this song out of compliment to one of the happiest and worthiest married couples in the world, Robert Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell, and his lady. At their fireside I have enjoyed more pleasant evenings than at all the houses of fashionable people in the country put together; and to their kindness and hospitality I am indebted for many of the happiest hours in my life."—*Burns' notes to Johnson's Museum.*

The day returns, my bosom burns,
The blissful day we twa did meet,
Tho' winter wild in tempest toil'd,
Ne'er summer-sun was half sae sweet.
Than a' the pride that loads the tide,
And crosses o'er the sultry line;
Than kingly robes, than crowns and globes,
Heaven gave me more,—it made thee mine!

While day and night can bring delight,
Or nature aught of pleasure give;
While joys above my mind can move,
For thee, and thee alone, I live!
When that grim foe of life below
Comes in between to make us part;
The iron hand that breaks our band,
It breaks my bliss,—it breaks my heart.

A MOTHER'S LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF HER SON.[2]

In a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated "Mauchline, 27th Sept., 1788," Burns says: "I am just arrived from Nithsdale and will be here a fortnight. I was on horseback this morning by three o'clock; for between my wife and my farm is just forty-six miles. As I jogged on in the dark I was taken with a poetic fit, as follows,"—the result of the poetic fit being this piece. The poet had by this time gone to live at Ellisland, but as there was no suitable dwelling-house on the farm, his wife still remained in Ayrshire.

Fate gave the word, the arrow sped,
And pierc'd my darling's heart:
And with him all the joys are fled
Life can to me impart.

[1] The song is transcribed into a letter to Miss Chalmers, dated 16th September, 1788. The air, which displays very little musical talent, is the composition of Mr. Riddell himself, who named it from the day of his marriage, The Seventh of November.

[2] Burns says himself:—"The 'Mother's Lament' was composed partly with a view to Mrs. Fergusson of Craigdarroch, and partly to the worthy patroness of my early unknown muse, Mrs. Stewart of Afton." Mrs. Fergusson's son died November 19, 1787, at the age of eighteen, after leaving college. Mrs. Stewart of Stair, the early patroness whom Burns had complimented in the "Brigs of Ayr," lost her only son, Alexander Gordon Stewart, only a fortnight later (at Strassburg, 5th December, 1787); and the circumstances of the two mothers resembling each other so closely, it is not to be wondered at that Burns inclosed a copy of this lament to Mrs. Stewart also, without subjecting himself to the charge of cheap sympathy and idly feigned poetic pains.

"We may suppose," says Robert Chambers, "that the parity of the two cases, and their nearness in point of time, had produced but one indivisible impression in the mind of the bard. Yet there is reason

By cruel hands the sapling drops,
In dust dishonour'd laid:
So fell the pride of all my hopes,
My age's future shade.

The mother-linnet in the brake
Bewails her ravish'd young;
So I, for my lost darling's sake,
Lament the live-day long.
Death, oft I've fear'd thy fatal blow,
Now, fond I bare my breast,
O, do thou kindly lay me low
With him I love, at rest!

SONG—THE LAZY MIST.

TUNE—"*The Lazy Mist.*"

This song, along with the preceding, was inclosed in a letter to Dr. Blacklock, dated Mauchline, 15th November, 1788, and containing the remark concerning them: "I have only sent you two melancholy things, and I tremble lest they should too well suit the tone of your present feelings."[1]

The lazy mist hangs from the brow of the hill,
Concealing the course of the dark winding rill;
How languid the scenes, late so sprightly, appear,
As autumn to winter resigns the pale year!

The forests are leafless, the meadows are brown,
And all the gay foppery of summer is flown:
Apart let me wander, apart let me muse,
How quick time is flying, how keen fate pursues!

How long I have liv'd—but how much liv'd in vain!
How little of life's scanty span may remain!
What aspects, old Time, in his progress, has worn!
What ties, cruel fate in my bosom has torn!

How foolish, or worse, till our summit is gain'd!
And downward, how weaken'd, how darken'd, how pain'd!
This life's not worth having with all it can give,
For something beyond it poor man sure must live.

to believe that in his complaisance towards his friends he was somewhat over eager to gratify them with poetical compliments, and oftener than once caused one to pay a double debt. We shall find that the little poem beginning, *Sensibility, how charming*, was first written on certain experiences of Mrs. M'Lehose, and sent to her, but afterwards addressed to 'my dear and much honoured friend, Mrs. Dunlop.' So the reader will perceive that even Burns had his little *mystères d'atelier*." Both deaths, it may be noticed, took place in 1787, while the above poem was not written till nearly a year later.

[1] The poet had written Dr. Blacklock in the preceding June, and having received no answer, was afraid that the doctor or his wife might be in bad health. A short sketch of the life of Dr. Blacklock will be found in connection with a poetical epistle by Burns to him, dated 21st October, 1789.——The imagery of this poem is in keeping with the season of the year at which it was written.

SONG—AULD LANG SYNE.[1]

This song was transcribed by Burns into a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated 17th December, 1788, in which he speaks of it thus:—"Apropos, is not the Scotch phrase, 'Auld lang syne' exceedingly expressive? There is an old song and tune which has often thrilled through my soul. . . . I shall give you the verses on the other sheet. . . . Light be the turf on the breast of the heaven-inspired poet who composed this glorious fragment! There is more of the fire of native genius in it than in half-a-dozen modern English Bacchanalians!"

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days o' lang syne? long ago
For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!

We twa hae run about the braes, slopes
An pu'd the gowans fine; pulled daisies
But we've wander'd mony a weary foot,
Sin' auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

[1] This song is usually regarded simply as the composition of Burns, all but a line or two and the title; yet how much of it is his, or whether any is so, seems fairly open to question, in the face of his own statements. It was sent to Johnson's *Museum*, and in the notes to this work (vol. v.) we are told that Burns acknowledged to Johnson that the second and third stanzas were his. In September, 1793, he sent the song to Thomson with the remarks (agreeing with what he had said to Mrs. Dunlop in 1788):—"One song more and I have done: 'Auld lang syne.' The air is but mediocre; but the following song, the old song of the olden times, and which has never been in print, nor even in manuscript, until I took it down from an old man's singing, is enough to recommend any air.' Thus on two very different occasions Burns disclaims any share in the composition of the song; and though editors generally regard his statements as mere mystification, we are by no means sure that we ought not to accept them as true. The air to which the words are set in the *Museum* has very little resemblance to the broad powerful melody the song is wedded to in Thomson's collection, and which is that to which it is now sung. Our version is the same as Thomson's but for one or two slight changes in spelling. Johnson prints the fifth stanza as the second. Other variations of his are "auld lang" for "days o' lang" in stanza first, "my jo" for "my dear" in the chorus, "weary fitt" for "weary foot" in stanza second, and "frien'" for "fiere" in stanza fourth. Mr. James C. Dick in his *Songs of Robert Burns* (1903) gives a version from a copy in the poet's handwriting, agreeing with Johnson's as to the order of stanzas, and having the readings "days o' lang," "my jo," "fiere," while the chorus begins with "and."

The words "old long syne" formed a refrain long before Burns's day: they appear in a song in Watson's *Scots Poems* (1711), beginning:

Should old acquaintance be forgot,
And never thought upon?

A ditty with the same title and same first line, and having the words "lang syne" recurring in it, is contained in Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany*, being by Allan himself. The first stanza runs:

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
Tho' they return with scars?
These are the noble hero's lot
Obtained in glorious wars.
Welcome, my Varo, to my breast,
Thy arms about me twine,
And make me once again as blest,
As I was lang syne.

Some remarks by Ritson, the cantankerous antiquarian editor, may here be quoted: "Burns," he says, "as good a poet as Ramsay, is, it must be regretted, an equally licentious and unfaithful publisher of the performances of others. Many of the original, old, ancient, genuine songs, inserted in Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*, derive not a little of their merit from passing through the hand of this very ingenious critic."

"The ship rides by the Berwick Law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary."
—GO, FETCH TO ME A PINT O' WINE.

"The ship rides by the Berwick Law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary."

We twa hae paidl't i' the burn, paddled brook
  Frae morning sun till dine: from
But seas between us braid hae roar'd, broad
  Sin' auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere! companion
  And gie's a hand o' thine!
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught, draught of right good
  For auld lang syne. [will
For auld, &c.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp, -tankard
  And surely I'll be mine;
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
  For auld lang syne.
For auld, &c.

SONG—GO, FETCH TO ME A PINT O' WINE.

TUNE—"*Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine.*"

In a letter to Mrs. Dunlop, dated 17th December, 1788, Burns gives a copy of this song, with the remark: "Now I am on my hobby-horse, I cannot help inserting two other stanzas which please me mightily." [The letter also contained a copy of "Auld Lang Syne."] He afterwards, however, acknowledged that only the first four lines were old, the rest his own.

Go, fetch to me a pint o' wine,
  An' fill it in a silver tassie; cup
That I may drink before I go,
  A service to my bonnie lassie.[1]
The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith;
  Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry; from
The ship rides by the Berwick Law,[2]
  And I maun leave my bonnie Mary. must

The trumpets sound, the banners fly,
  The glittering spears are ranked ready;
The shouts o' war are heard afar,
  The battle closes thick and bloody;

[1] Similar lines occur in a song given by Peter Buchan, who states that it was composed in 1636 by Alexander Leslie of Edin on Doveran (or Deveron) side, grandfather to the celebrated Archbishop Sharpe. We quote the stanza, but would remind the reader that at times, when Buchan failed to find what he wanted, he straightway invented it:

> Ye'll bring me here a pint o' wine,
> A server and a silver tassie;
> That I may drink before I gang
> A health to my ain bonnie lassie.

Burns, it is further said, composed this song after seeing a young officer take leave of his sweetheart at the pier of Leith, and embark for foreign service. The tune to which the words are set in Johnson's *Museum* was recovered and communicated by the poet. A new melody more pleasing to modern ears has been constructed from it.

[2] North Berwick Law, in East Lothian. The ship would thus be about 20 miles from Leith: a prosaic reader might reasonably ask why she was not lying nearer and more accessible by boat.

But it's not the roar o' sea or shore
Wad make me langer wish to tarry; would
Nor shouts o' war that's heard afar,—
It's leaving thee, my bonnie Mary.

VERSES WRITTEN IN FRIARS' CARSE HERMITAGE, ON NITHSIDE.[1]

Thou whom chance may hither lead,
Be thou clad in russet weed,
Be thou deckt in silken stole,
Grave these counsels on thy soul.

Life is but a day at most,
Sprung from night, in darkness lost;[2]
Hope not sunshine ev'ry hour,
Fear not clouds will always lower.

As Youth and Love, with sprightly dance,[3]
Beneath thy morning star advance,
Pleasure, with her siren air,
May delude the thoughtless pair;
Let prudence bless enjoyment's cup
Then raptur'd sip, and sip it up.

[1] This poem in its original form was written about June, 1788, in a hermitage belonging to Captain Riddell of Glenriddell and Friars' Carse, situated at a short distance from Ellisland. Captain Riddell had given Burns a key admitting him to the grounds, and of this privilege the poet largely availed himself in the pleasant summer weather, often musing in the beautiful hermitage. So highly did the poet think of this production that he scattered MS. copies on all hands. Some of these afford interesting variations: one of them, indeed, which appears to have been the original draught, differs almost wholly from the others, except the first six lines and the concluding couplet. The lines that differ from those above are given in following notes. The version that we have adopted in our text dates from the end of 1788. Some half dozen of the lines at the beginning were engraved with a diamond on a pane of the window of the hermitage. The piece (like one or two others of about the same period) seems to be an effort to comply with the advice of Dr. Moore, given the poet more than a twelvemonth before, to write less in his provincial dialect, as he thereby limited the number of his admirers to those who understood the Scottish language. On May 23d, 1787, Dr. Moore wrote as follows: "It is evident that you already possess a great variety of expression and command of the English language; you ought therefore to deal more sparingly, for the future, in the provincial dialect—why should you, by using that, limit the number of your admirers to those who understand the Scottish, when you could extend it to all persons of taste who understand the English language? In my opinion you should plan some larger work than any you have yet attempted. I mean, reflect upon some proper subject, and arrange the plan in your mind, without beginning to execute any part of it till you have studied most of the English poets, and read a little more of history."

[2] In one MS. two lines are inserted after these:—

Day, how rapid in its flight—
Day, how few must see the night.

[3] The poet sent an early copy of the piece to his friend Mrs. Dunlop. In a letter from Mauchline, dated August 2d, 1788, he says: "I shall transcribe you a few lines I wrote in a hermitage, belonging to a gentleman in my Nithsdale neighbourhood. They are almost the only favours the muses have conferred on me in that country." Then come the first eight lines as above, followed by those we are about to give, the whole ending with the final couplet of our text.

Happiness is but a name,
Make content and ease thy aim.
Ambition is a meteor-gleam;
Fame, a restless idle dream:
Peace, the tend'rest flow'r of spring;
Pleasures, insects on the wing.
Those that sip the dew alone—
Make the butterflies thy own;
Those that would the bloom devour—
Crush the locusts, save the flower.
For the future be prepared,
Guard wherever thou canst guard;

"Thou whom chance may hither lead."
—VERSES WRITTEN IN FRIARS' CARSE HERMITAGE.

"Thou whom chance may hither lead."

As thy day grows warm and high,
Life's meridian flaming nigh,
Dost thou spurn the humble vale?
Life's proud summits wouldst thou scale?
Check thy climbing step, elate,
Evils lurk in felon wait:
Dangers, eagle-pinion'd, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold,
While cheerful Peace, with linnet song,
Chants the lowly dells among.

As the shades of ev'ning close,
Beck'ning thee to long repose;
As life itself becomes disease,
Seek the chimney-nook of ease.
There ruminate, with sober thought,
On all thou'st seen, and heard, and wrought;
And teach the sportive younkers round,
Saws of experience, sage and sound.
Say, man's true, genuine estimate,
The grand criterion of his fate,
Is not, Art thou high or low?
Did thy fortune ebb or flow?
Did many talents gild thy span?
Or frugal Nature grudge thee one?[1]
Tell them, and press it on their mind,
As thou thyself must shortly find,
The smile or frown of awful Heav'n,
To Virtue or to Vice is giv'n.
Say, to be just, and kind, and wise,
There solid self-enjoyment lies:
That foolish, selfish, faithless ways,
Lead to the[2] wretched, vile, and base

Thus resign'd and quiet, creep
To the[3] bed of lasting sleep;
Sleep, whence thou shalt ne'er awake,
Night, where dawn shall never break,
Till future life, future no more,
To light and joy the good restore,
To light and joy unknown before.

Stranger, go! Heav'n be thy guide!
Quod the beadsman of Nithside. quoth

But, thy utmost duty done,
Welcome what thou canst not shun.
Follies past, give thou to air,
Make their consequence thy care
Keep the name of man in mind,
And dishonour not thy kind.
Reverence with lowly heart
Him whose wondrous work thou art;
Keep his goodness still in view,
Thy trust—and thy example, too.

[1] In one MS. instead of the above lines these appear:—

Say, the criterion of their fate,
Th' important query of their state,
Is not, Art thou high or low?
Did thy fortune ebb or flow?
Wert thou cottager or king?
Prince or peasant? no such thing.

[2] MS. variation "be." [3] MS. variation "thy.

TO A KISS.[1]

Humid seal of soft affections,
  Tend'rest pledge of future bliss,
Dearest tie of young connections,
  Love's first snow-drop, virgin kiss.

Speaking silence, dumb confession,
  Passion's birth, and infants' play,
Dove-like fondness, chaste concession,
  Glowing dawn of brighter day.

Sorrowing joy, adieu's last action,
  Ling'ring lips,—no more to join!
What words can ever speak affection
  Thrilling and sincere as thine!

THE POET'S PROGRESS.[2]

A POEM IN EMBRYO.

Thou, Nature, partial Nature, I arraign;
Of thy caprice maternal I complain.
  The peopled fold thy kindly care have found,
The horned bull, tremendous, spurns the ground;

[1] These lines do not resemble the usual coinage of the Burns mint, though Robert Chambers thought their Burns authorship could not be well doubted. They appeared, fully seventy years ago, in a Liverpool periodical, *The Kaleidoscope*, as a production of Burns.

[2] The first reference to this poem we meet with is in the poet's letter to Mrs. Dunlop of 1st January, 1789, in which he says, "I am a very sincere believer in the Bible; but I am drawn by the conviction of a man, not by the halter of an ass.—Apropos to an ass, how do you like the following apostrophe to Dulness, which I intend to interweave in the 'Poet's Progress?'" He then transcribes the concluding twenty lines of the poem. On the 20th of the same month he sent the MS. of the poem to Professor Dugald Stewart, along with a letter containing the following remarks:—"This poem" (he is here alluding to the first "Epistle to Mr. Graham of Fintry," manifestly written in the style of Pope's epistles) "is a species of composition new to me; but I do not intend it shall be the last essay of the kind, as you will see by the 'Poet's Progress.' These fragments, if my design succeed, are but a small part of the intended whole. I propose it shall be the work of my utmost exertions ripened by years; of course I do not wish it to be much known. The fragment beginning 'A little, upright, pert, tart, &c., I have not shown to man living till I now send it to you. It forms the postulate, the axioms, the definition of a character, which, if it appear at all, shall be placed in a variety of lights. This particular part I send you merely as a sample of my hand at portrait sketching; but lest idle conjecture should point out the original, please to let it be for your single, sole inspection." "Idle conjecture" has "pointed out the original" as Creech (the publisher of the Edinburgh edition of the poet's works), and has not gone very wide of the mark. In a letter to Dr. Moore written about the same time, Burns says, "I cannot boast of Mr. Creech's ingenuous, fair dealing to me. He kept me hanging about Edinburgh from the 7th of August, 1787, until the 13th April, 1788, before he would condescend to give me a statement of affairs; nor had I got it even then but for an angry letter I wrote him which irritated his pride. 'I could'—not 'a tale' but a *detail* 'unfold;' but what am I that I should speak against the Lord's anointed Bailie of Edinburgh?'

The section commencing abruptly "Crochallan came" forms a sketch of William Smellie, Edinburgh. See the epigram "Shrewd Willie Smellie," &c., where different readings occur. The greater part of the above poem was afterwards incorporated into another "Epistle to Mr. Graham of Fintry," beginning,

Late crippl'd of an arm and now a leg,

given in a subsequent part of this work. The piece was first printed as here given in Paterson's Edinburgh edition (1877–79) from a MS. in possession of the publisher.

The lordly lion has enough and more,
The forest trembles at his very roar;
Thou giv'st the ass his hide, the snail his shell,
The puny wasp, victorious, guards his cell.—
Thy minions kings defend, control, devour,
In all th' omnipotence of rule and power:
Foxes and statesmen subtile wiles ensure;
The cit and polecat stink, and are secure:
Toads with their poison, doctors with their drug,
The priest and hedgehog in their robes are snug:
E'en silly women have defensive arts,
Their eyes, their tongues—and nameless other parts.
But O thou cruel stepmother and hard,
To thy poor fenceless, naked child, the Bard!
A thing unteachable in worldly skill,
And half an idiot, too, more helpless still:
No heels to bear him from the op'ning dun,
No claws to dig, his hated sight to shun:
No horns, but those by luckless Hymen worn,
And those, alas! not Amalthea's horn:
No nerves olfact'ry, true to Mammon's foot,
Or grunting, grub sagacious, evil's root:
The silly sheep that wanders wild astray,
Is not more friendless, is not more a prey;
Vampyre-booksellers drain him to the heart,
And viper-critics cureless venom dart.
Critics! appall'd I venture on the name,
Those cut-throat bandits in the paths of fame,
Bloody dissectors, worse than ten Monroes,[1]
He hacks to teach, they mangle to expose:
By blockhead's daring into madness stung,
His heart by wanton, causeless malice wrung,
His well-won bays—than life itself more dear—
By miscreants torn who ne'er one sprig must wear;
Foil'd, bleeding, tortur'd in th' unequal strife,
The hapless Poet flounces on through life,
Till, fled each hope that once his bosom fired,
And fled each Muse that glorious once inspir'd
Low-sunk in squalid, unprotected age,
Dead even resentment for his injur'd page,
He heeds no more the ruthless critics' rage.
So by some hedge the generous steed deceas'd,
For half-starv'd, snarling curs a dainty feast,
By toil and famine worn to skin and bone,
Lies, senseless of each tugging bitch's son.

* * * * * * *

[1] Alluding to Dr. Alexander Monro, an anatomist of European fame, and one of the professors in Edinburgh University both before and after the time of the poet.

A little, upright, pert, tart, tripping wight,
And still his precious self his dear delight;
Who loves his own smart shadow in the streets,
Better than e'er the fairest she he meets;
Much specious lore, but little understood,
(Veneering oft outshines the solid wood)
His solid sense, by inches you must tell,
But mete his cunning by the Scottish ell!
A man of fashion too, he made his tour,
Learn'd "vive la bagatelle et vive l'amour;"
So travell'd monkeys their grimace improve,
Polish their grin—nay, sigh for ladies' love!
His meddling vanity, a busy fiend,
Still making work his selfish craft must mend.

* * * * * * *

* * * * * * *

* * * * Crochallan came,
The old cock'd hat, the brown surtout—the same;
His grisly beard just bristling in its might—
'Twas four long nights and days from shaving night!
His uncomb'd, hoary locks, wild-staring, thatch'd
A head, for thought profound and clear, unmatch'd;
Yet, tho' his caustic wit was biting rude,
His heart was warm, benevolent and good.

* * * * * * *

O Dulness, portion of the truly blest!
Calm, shelter'd haven of eternal rest!
Thy sons ne'er madden in the fierce extremes
Of Fortune's polar frost, or torrid beams;
If mantling high she fills the golden cup,
With sober selfish ease they sip it up;
Conscious the bounteous meed they well deserve,
They only wonder "some folks" do not starve!
The grave, sage hern thus easy picks his frog,
And thinks the mallard a sad worthless dog.
When disappointment snaps the thread of Hope,
When, thro' disastrous night, they darkling grope,
With deaf endurance sluggishly they bear,
And just conclude that "fools are Fortune's care;"
So heavy, passive to the tempest's shocks,
Strong on the sign-post stands the stupid ox.

Not so the idle Muses' mad-cap train,
Not so the workings of their moon-struck brain.
In equanimity they never dwell,
By turns in soaring heaven, or vaulted hell!

THE HENPECKED HUSBAND.

Curs'd be the man, the poorest wretch in life,
The crouching vassal to the tyrant wife,
Who has no will but by her high permission;
Who has not sixpence but in her possession;
Who must to her his dear friend's secret tell;
Who dreads a curtain-lecture worse than hell.
Were such the wife had fallen to my part,
I'd break her spirit, or I'd break her heart;
I'd charm her with the magic of a switch,
I'd kiss her maids, and kick the perverse bitch.[1]

ELEGY ON THE YEAR 1788.[2]

A SKETCH.

For lords or kings I dinna mourn,
E'en let them die—for that they're born;
But oh! prodigious to reflec'!
A *Towmont*, Sirs, is gane to wreck! twelvemonth
O *Eighty-eight*, in thy sma' space
What dire events hae taken place!
Of what enjoyments thou hast reft us!
In what a pickle thou hast left us!

The Spanish empire 's tint a head,[3] lost
An' my auld teethless Bawtie's[4] dead;
The tulzie 's teugh 'tween Pitt and Fox, struggle tough
And 'tween our Maggie's twa wee cocks;
The tane is game, a bluidie devil, the one
But to the hen-birds unco civil; remarkably
The tither's something dour o' treadin', the other stiff
But better stuff ne'er claw'd a midden—
Ye ministers, come mount the poupit, pulpit
An' cry till ye be hearse an' roupet, hoarse rough-voiced
For *Eighty-eight* he wish'd you weel,
An' gied you a' baith gear an' meal; both money
E'en mony a plack, and mony a peck, copper
Ye ken yoursels, for little feck!— result

Ye bonnie lasses, dight your een, wipe eyes
For some o' you hae tint a frien'; lost

[1] These lines were probably intended to form a part of the "Poet's Progress" given above.

[2] This piece found its way into the newspapers, and thence into chap-books. Thomas Stewart published it among other posthumous poems of Burns, as did also Cromek in 1808, his version differing slightly from that which had been given by Stewart.

[3] Charles III., King of Spain, died 13th December, 1788.

[4] A favourite dog is so called familiarly in Scotland.

In *Eighty-eight*, ye ken, was ta'en
What ye'll ne'er hae to gie again.

Observe the very nowt an' sheep, cattle
How dowf and dowie now they creep; melancholy dull
Nay, even the yirth itsel' does cry, earth
For E'nburgh wells are grutten dry.[1] wept

O *Eighty-nine*, thou's but a bairn,
An' no o'er auld, I hope, to learn!
Thou beardless boy, I pray tak care,
Thou now has got thy daddy's chair,
Nae hand-cuff'd, mizzl'd, hap-shackl'd regent,[2] muzzled, fettered
But, like himsel', a full free agent.
Be sure ye follow out the plan
Nae waur than he did, honest man! no worse
As muckle better as you can.

January 1, 1789.

ODE.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF

MRS. OSWALD OF AUCHINCRUIVE.[3]

"The inclosed ode is a compliment to the memory of the late Mrs. Oswald of Auchincruive. You, probably, knew her personally, an honour of which I cannot boast; but I spent my early years in her neighbourhood, and among her servants and tenants I know that she was detested with the most heartfelt cordiality. However, in the particular part of her conduct which roused my poetic wrath, she was much less blameable. In January last, on my road to Ayrshire, I had put up at Bailie Whigham's in Sanquhar, the only tolerable inn in the place. The frost was keen, and the grim evening and howling wind were ushering in a night of snow and drift. My horse and I were both much fatigued with the labours of the day; and just as my friend the Bailie and I were bidding defiance to the storm, over a smoking bowl, in wheels the funeral pageantry of the late great Mrs. Oswald, and poor I am forced to brave all the horrors of the tempestuous night, and jade my horse, my young favourite horse, whom I had just christened Pegasus, twelve miles farther on, through the wildest moors and hills of Ayrshire, to New Cumnock, the next inn. The powers of poesy and prose sink under me, when I would describe what I felt. Suffice it to say, that when a good fire at New Cumnock had so far recovered my frozen sinews, I sat down and wrote the inclosed ode."—*Letter to Dr. Moore, 23rd March*, 1789.

Dweller in yon dungeon dark,
Hangman of creation, mark!
Who in widow-weeds appears,
Laden with unhonour'd years,

[1] Referring to the hard frost of the closing month of the year, which, according to the newspapers of the day, had frozen up the wells.

[2] Symptoms of insanity having shown themselves in the king in November, the public were discussing proposals for the choice of a regent. *Hap-shackled* seems to mean fettered so that he can only "*hap*" or hop (or it may be an error for *hip-shackled*).

[3] This ode, unfortunately, shows a bad taste and savageness of invective unworthy of the poet. We can hardly think that Burns was absolutely compelled to quit the inn in consequence of the arrival of the "funeral pageantry." Surely his friend and host Bailie Whigham could have accommodated him somehow, or, at least, got accommodation for him in the village. The lady is said not to have had the character Burns ascribes to her. Her grand-nephew, Richard Alexander Oswald, married Miss Lucy Johnston of Hilton, the subject of the poet's fine song "O wat ye wha's in yon town."

Noosing with care a bursting purse,
Baited with many a deadly curse?

STROPHE.

View the wither'd Beldam's face—
Can thy keen inspection trace
Aught of Humanity's sweet, melting grace?
Note that eye, 'tis rheum o'erflows,
Pity's flood there never rose.
See those hands, ne'er stretch'd to save,
Hands that took—but never gave.
Keeper of Mammon's iron chest,
Lo, there she goes, unpitied and unblest;
She goes, but not to realms of everlasting rest!

ANTISTROPHE.

Plunderer of armies,[1] lift thine eyes,
(A while forbear, ye tort'ring fiends,)
Seest thou whose step unwilling hither bends?
No fallen angel, hurl'd from upper skies;
'Tis thy trusty quondam mate,
Doom'd to share thy fiery fate,
She, tardy, hell-ward plies.

EPODE.

And are they of no more avail,
Ten thousand glitt'ring pounds a year
In other worlds can Mammon fail,
Omnipotent as he is here?
O, bitter mock'ry of the pompous bier,
While down the wretched vital part is driv'n!
The cave-lodg'd beggar, with a conscience clear,
Expires in rags, unknown, and goes to Heav'n.

SONG—SHE'S FAIR AND FAUSE.[2]

TUNE—"*She's fair and fause.*

She's fair and fause that causes my smart, false
I lo'ed her meikle and lang; much

[1] "The lands of Auchincruive were purchased, about 1760, by Richard Oswald, husband of the lady held up to execration by Burns. He was a merchant in London and was appointed a plenipotentiary to sign the Articles of Peace with the United States in 1782."—W. SCOTT DOUGLAS. We do not know why he should be here stigmatized as "plunderer of armies;" probably he may have been an army contractor. He died November 6, 1784. The *Scots Magazine*, noticing his death, adds, "lately employed at Paris as a commissioner for negotiating a peace with the United States of America."

[2] The above cynical fling at womankind (how unlike the bard!) was sent to the fourth volume of Johnson's *Museum* along with its tune, a rather sprightly and pleasing melody. It is supposed that the song refers to the case of the poet's friend Alexander Cunningham which also gave rise to the songs "Had I a Cave," and "Now Spring has clad." See note to the latter song.

She's broken her vow, she's broken my heart,
And I may e'en gae hang.
A coof cam in wi' rowth o' gear, fool much wealth
And I hae tint my dearest dear; lost
But woman is but warld's gear,
Sae let the bonnie lass gang.

Whae'er ye be that woman love,
To this be never blind,
Nae ferlie 'tis tho' fickle she prove, wonder
A woman has't by kind.
O woman, lovely woman fair!
An angel form 's fa'n to thy share, fallen
'Twad been ower meikle to gi'en thee mair— it would have been too
I mean an angel mind. [much

FRAGMENT—BY ALL I LOV'D.[1]

In a letter to Alexander Cunningham of date 24th January, 1789, Burns writes: "I shall ask your opinion of some verses I have lately begun on a theme of which you are the best judge I ever saw. It is Love, too, though not just warranted by the law of nations. A married lady of my acquaintance, whose *crim. con.* amour with a certain captain has made some noise in the world is supposed to write to him, now in the West Indies, as follows:—

By all I lov'd, neglected and forgot," &c.

In a letter to Gavin Hamilton (8th March, 1787) there is further allusion to this case. "Poor Captain Montgomery is cast. Yesterday it was tried [in the Court of Session] whether the husband could proceed against the unfortunate lover without first divorcing his wife, and their Gravities on the Bench were unanimously of opinion that Maxwell may prosecute for damages directly, and need not divorce his wife at all if he pleases."

By all I lov'd, neglected and forgot,
No friendly face e'er lights my squalid cot;
Shunn'd, hated, wrong'd, unpitied, unredrest,
The mock'd quotation of the scorner's jest!

In vain would Prudence, with decorous sneer,
Point out a censuring world, and bid me fear;
Above the world, on wings of Love, I rise—
I know its worst, and can that worst despise:

[1] This fragment was first printed connectedly in Paterson's edition of Burns (1877). The first four lines were quoted in the author's letter to Alexander Cunningham. The second section, along with the two last lines of the preceding one, were copied into what, so far as is known, was Burns's last letter to Clarinda. The third section first appeared in Dr. Hately Waddell's edition of Burns (1867); and the last was first printed in the Aldine edition (1839) as having been addressed to Clarinda in 1788, but the verses form no part of the authorized edition of the Clarinda Correspondence of 1843. These last eighteen lines are found in the British Museum collection of Burns MSS., written in his own hand, without heading or other explanation as to their connection.

"It appears," says Robert Chambers, "that the lady was heiress of S——, that she had had two children to her husband, and that she left his house in June, 1783, in company with Captain Montgomery (of the 93rd Foot), to whom she bore a child in the November of the subsequent year. From Burns's expressions we are led to understand that there were extenuating circumstances in the conduct of the lady, and that the policy of the husband in abstaining from a process of divorce, which would separate him from a goodly estate, was not popular."

Let Prudence' direst bodements on me fall,
M——y, rich reward, o'erpays them all!

Mild zephyrs waft thee to Life's farthest shore,
Nor think of me and my distresses more,—
Falsehood accurst! No! still I beg a place,
Still near thy heart some little, little trace;
For that dear trace the world I would resign,
O let me live and die, and think it mine!

"I burn, I burn, as when through ripen'd corn
By driving winds the crackling flames are borne;"[1]
Now raving-wild, I curse that fatal night,
Then bless the hour that charmed my guilty sight:
In vain the laws their feeble force oppose,
Chain'd at Love's feet, they groan, his vanquish'd foes:
In vain Religion meets my shrinking eye,
I dare not combat, but I turn and fly:
Conscience in vain upbraids th' unhallow'd fire,
Love grasps her scorpions—stifled they expire!
Reason drops headlong from his sacred throne,
Your dear idea reigns, and reigns alone;
Each thought intoxicated homage yields,
And riots wanton in forbidden fields.
By all on high adoring mortals know!
By all the conscious villain fears below!
By your dear self!—the last great oath I swear,
Not life, nor soul, were ever half so dear!

BALLAD—CALEDONIA.[2]

TUNE—"*Caledonian Hunt's delight.*" [Gow's version.]

There was once a day, but old Time then was young,
That brave Caledonia, the chief of her line,
From some of your northern deities sprung,
(Who knows not that brave Caledonia's divine?)
From Tweed to the Orcades was her domain,
To hunt, or to pasture, or do what she would:
Her heavenly relations there fixed her reign,
And pledg'd her their godheads to warrant it good.

[1] Quoted from Pope's "Sappho to Phaon."

[2] The poet here presents us with a curious epitome of early national history. The first two stanzas are occupied in describing Caledonia at that period

When wild in woods the noble savage ran.

The third stanza alludes to the Romans; the fourth to the contentions with the Picts ("the Cameleon-savage") and with England; the fifth to the incursions of the Norwegian sea-kings and the Danes. In Currie's version of this piece the fourth and fifth stanzas were transposed. In true historical succession the Picts should be mentioned before the Scandinavians, but the poet's ethnology and history are both a little confused.——The ballad was sent to the *Musical Museum*, but was not inserted

A lambkin in peace, but a lion in war,
The pride of her kindred, the heroine grew:
Her grandsire, old Odin, triumphantly swore,—
"Whoe'er shall provoke thee, th' encounter shall rue!"
With tillage or pasture at times she would sport,
To feed her fair flocks by her green rustling corn;
But chiefly the woods were her fav'rite resort,
Her darling amusement the hounds and the horn.

Long quiet she reigned; till thitherward steers
A flight of bold eagles from Adria's strand;
Repeated, successive, for many long years,
They darken'd the air, and they plunder'd the land:
Their pounces were murder, and terror their cry,
They'd conquer'd and ruin'd a world beside;
She took to her hills, and her arrows let fly,—
The daring invaders they fled or they died.

The Cameleon-savage disturb'd her repose,
With tumult, disquiet, rebellion, and strife;
Provok'd beyond bearing, at last she arose,
And robb'd him at once of his hopes and his life:
The Anglian lion, the terror of France,
Oft prowling, ensanguin'd the Tweed's silver flood;
But, taught by the bright Caledonian lance,
He learned to fear in his own native wood.

The fell harpy-raven took wing from the north,
The scourge of the seas, and the dread of the shore;
The wild Scandinavian boar issued forth
To wanton in carnage and wallow in gore:
O'er countries and kingdoms their fury prevail'd,
No arts could appease them, no arms could repel;
But brave Caledonia in vain they assail'd,
As Largs[1] well can witness, and Loncartie[2] tell.

Thus bold, independent, unconquered, and free,
Her bright course of glory for ever shall run:
For brave Caledonia immortal must be;
I'll prove it from Euclid as clear as the sun:[3]
Rectangle-triangle, the figure we'll choose,
The upright is Chance, and old Time is the base;
But brave Caledonia's the hypothenuse;
Then, ergo, she'll match them, and match them always.

[1] The battle of Largs (on the Firth of Clyde) was fought on the 2d October, 1263, between the Norse invaders under King Haco, and the Scotch, resulting in a decisive victory for the latter.

[2] Loncartie or Luncarty is a place a few miles north of Perth where a battle is said to have taken place between the Norsemen and the Scots during the reign of Kenneth III. (970–994), victory remaining on the side of the latter. John Hill Burton, however, sets down the story of such a battle as a comparatively recent invention.

[3] We are afraid that Euclid would demur a little at finding his authority invoked in such a manner as this.

TO JOHN M'MURDO, ESQ.[1]

WITH A POEM.

O, could I give thee India's wealth
As I this trifle send!
Because thy joy in both would be
To share them with a friend.

But golden sands did never grace
The Heliconian stream;
Then take what gold could never buy—
An honest Bard's esteem.

TO CAPTAIN RIDDELL, GLENRIDDELL.[2]

(EXTEMPORE LINES ON RETURNING A NEWSPAPER.)

ELLISLAND, Monday Evening.

Your News and Review, Sir, I've read through and through, Sir,
With little admiring or blaming;
The papers are barren of home-news or foreign,
No murders or rapes worth the naming.

Our friends the reviewers, those chippers and hewers,
Are judges of mortar and stone, Sir;
But of meet, or unmeet, in a fabric complete,
I'll boldly pronounce they are none, Sir.

My goose-quill too rude is, to tell all your goodness
Bestow'd on your servant, the Poet;
Would to God I had one like a beam of the sun,
And then all the world, Sir, should know it!

TO CAPTAIN RIDDELL.[3]

DEAR SIR, at ony time or tide
I'd rather sit wi' you than ride,
Tho' 'twere wi' royal Geordie;
And, trowth, your kindness soon and late
Aft gars me to mysel look blate— makes ashamed.
The Lord in Heaven reward ye!

[1] This gentleman was chamberlain to the Duke of Queensberry, and resided with his family in Drumlanrig Castle a few miles from Ellisland. In a letter to him dated January 19th, 1789, Burns says: "The enclosed is nearly my newest song, and one that has cost me some pains, though that is but an equivocal mark of its excellence." What the song was is not known.

[2] The review mentioned in these lines, it is said, contained some sharp strictures on Burns's poetry. It seems to have given him but little concern. His character as a poet was already fixed by the testimony of the first critics of the age; and this, he felt, was not likely to be affected by the carpings of a "hackney scribbler."

[3] The above lines form a reply to a rhymed note of

SONG—BEWARE O' BONNIE ANN.[1]

TUNE—"*Ye Gallants Bright.*"

Ye gallants bright, I rede you right, advise
Beware o' bonnie Ann;
Her comely face sae fu' o' grace,
Your heart she will trepan.
Her een sae bright, like stars by night,
Her skin is like the swan;
Sae jimply lac'd her genty waist, slimly elegant
That sweetly ye might span.

Youth, grace, and love, attendant move,
And pleasure leads the van:
In a' their charms, and conquering arms,
They wait on bonnie Ann.
The captive bands may chain the hands,
But love enslaves the man;
Ye gallants braw, I rede ye a', handsome
Beware o' bonnie Ann.

LETTER TO JAMES TENNANT OF GLENCONNER.[2]

Auld comrade dear and brither sinner,
How's a' the folk about Glenconner?
How do you this blae eastlin' win'? bleak easterly
That's like to blaw a body blin'? blow a person blind

his friend and neighbour, the Laird of Friars' Carse, which runs as follows:

> Dear Bard, to ride this day is vain,
> For it will be a steeping rain,
> So come and sit with me;
> We'll twa or three leaves fill up with scraps,
> And whiles fill up the time with cracks,
> And spend the day with glee.

It is evident from the above that there had been an arrangement between Riddell and Burns to have a ride out, but that the weather had proved unfavourable. The above lines are of more personal than literary interest; they speak of the kindly feeling and familiar intercourse that existed between the poet and Captain Riddell even in the first year of their acquaintance. The allusion to the "twa or three leaves" to be filled up with scraps, seems to indicate that Burns had already begun to transcribe for his host those poems which form one volume of the Glenriddell MSS. now in the Athenæum Library, Liverpool.

[1] Ann Masterton, daughter of Mr. Allan Masterton, teacher of writing and music in the High School, Edinburgh, was the inspirer of these verses. Miss Masterton afterwards became Mrs. Derbishire, her husband being a medical man, practising at Bath, and subsequently in London. The song was written during the poet's visit to Edinburgh in February, 1789, and published in Johnson's third volume, united to an air composed by Allan Masterton himself.

[2] James Tennant of Glenconner, in the parish of Ochiltree, Ayrshire, was the son of the "guid auld Glen" of this rhyming epistle, the sagacious farmer who had accompanied the poet to Nithsdale at the end of February, 1788, to inspect Mr. Miller's farms, and on whose advice he fixed on Ellisland. The poet was acquainted with the family in his early years, when John Tennant, the father ("auld Glen"), was tenant of a farm near the Bridge of Doon. "Preacher Willie," the half-brother of James, was the Rev. William Tennant, LL.D., author of *Indian Recreations*, 1804, and *Thoughts on the Effect of the British Government on the State of India*, 1807, who was chaplain to the troops in Bengal, and died at Glenconner in 1813. "Wabster Charlie," brother of "Preacher Willie," became the founder of the famous chemical works of St. Rollox, Glasgow. "The manly tar, my mason-billie," according to Mr. Scott Douglas, was David Tennant, another brother, who latterly lived at Swansea. "Auchenbay" and "Singing

For me, my faculties are frozen,
My dearest member nearly dozen'd. numbed
I've sent you here by Johnie Simson,
Twa sage philosophers to glimpse on.
Smith, wi' his sympathetic feeling,
And Reid, to common sense appealing.
Philosophers have fought and wrangled,
And meikle Greek and Latin mangled, much
Till wi' their logic-jargon tir'd,
And in the depth of Science mir'd,
To common sense they now appeal,
What wives and wabsters see and feel. weavers
But, hark ye, friend, I charge you strictly,
Peruse them, and return them quickly,
For now I'm grown sae cursèd douce, serious
I pray and ponder butt the house. in the kitchen
My shins, my lane, I there sit roastin', by myself
Perusing Bunyan, Brown, and Boston;
Till by and by, if I haud on, hold
I'll grunt a real Gospel-groan:
Already I begin to try it,
To cast my een up like a pyet, eye magpie
When by the gun she tumbles o'er,
Flutt'ring and gasping in her gore:
Sae shortly you shall see me bright,
A burning and a shining light.

My heart-warm love to guid auld Glen,
The ace and wale of honest men: pick
When bending down wi' auld grey hairs,
Beneath the load of years and cares,
May He who made him still support him,
And views beyond the grave comfort him.
His worthy fam'ly far and near,
God bless them a' wi' grace and gear![1] wealth

My auld school-fellow, Preacher Willie,
The manly tar, my mason-billie, brother
And Auchenbay, I wish him joy!
If he's a parent, lass or boy,
May he be dad, and Meg the mither,
Just five-and-forty years thegither!

Sannock" (that is Alexander) were also brothers. The former (John Tennant) is so called here from his place of residence in Ochiltree parish. Sir Charles Tennant, Bart., of the Glen, Peeblesshire, who died in 1906, a millionaire several times over, was the grandson of "Wabster Charlie."

Burns wrote to Robert Ainslie on 3d March, 1788, of John Tennant—"he is, without exception, the most intelligent farmer in the country."

1 "This poem is one of those every-day business-like effusions which Burns occasionally penned. Though not equal to some of his earlier epistles, yet it is well worth preserving as a proof of the ease with which he could wind verse round any topic, and conduct the duties and courtesies of life in song. His account of having 'grown sae cursed douce,' and scorching himself at the fire—

Perusing Bunyan, Brown, and Boston,

is archly introduced."—ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

And not forgetting wabster Charlie, weaver
I'm tauld he offers very fairly.
And, Lord, remember singing Sannock,
Wi' hale breeks, saxpence, and a bannock. whole breeches oat-cake
And next, my auld acquaintance, Nancy,
Since she is fitted to her fancy;
And her kind stars hae airted till her directed
A good chiel wi' a pickle siller. fellow some cash
My kindest, best respects I sen' it,
To cousin Kate and sister Janet;
Tell them frae me, wi' chiels be cautious, fellows
For, faith, they'll aiblins fin' them fashious: perhaps troublesome
To grant a heart is fairly civil,
But to grant a maidenhead's the devil.—
And lastly, Jamie, for yoursel,
May guardian angels tak a spell,
And steer you seven miles south o' hell:
But first, before you see heav'n's glory,
May ye get mony a merry story,
Mony a laugh, and mony a drink,
And aye eneugh o' needfu' clink. money

Now fare ye weel, and joy be wi' you,
For my sake this I beg it o' you,
Assist poor Simson a' ye can,
Ye'll fin' him just an honest man;
Sae I conclude and quat my chanter. quit my pipe
Yours, saint or sinner,

Rob the Ranter.

ODE TO THE DEPARTED REGENCY BILL.[1]

Daughter of Chaos' doting years,
Nurse of ten thousand hopes and fears,
Whether thy airy unsubstantial shade
(The rites of sepulture now duly paid),

[1] This was written in the spring of 1789, the occasion being as follows:—After attending a levee on the 24th October, 1788, George III. was seized with a violent fever, and in a few days became decidedly insane. The privy-council, on examining the king's physicians, agreed that he could not attend to public affairs. In discussing before parliament the introduction of a Regency Bill, C. J. Fox (the "Charles" of the ode) declared on the 10th December that the Prince of Wales had as clear and express a right to assume the reins of government, and exercise the powers of sovereignty during the incapacity of his majesty, as in the case of his majesty's natural demise. Pitt, then the premier, held, on the other hand, that to assert a right in the Prince of Wales to assume the regency, independent of the decision of both Houses of Parliament, was treason to the constitution. After a protracted and severe struggle, and much popular commotion, the Regency Bill passed the Commons on the 12th February, 1789, but it soon became evident that a great improvement had taken place in the king's condition. On the 10th March it was publicly announced that his majesty had recovered from his indisposition and was enabled to attend to state affairs, and the bill was consequently dropped.—— The first edition of Burns's works in which this piece was included was that of Mr. Scott Douglas (Paterson, Edinburgh, 1877-79).

Spread abroad its hideous form
On the roaring civil storm,
Deafening din and warring rage,
Factions will with factions wage;
Or underground, deep-sunk, profound,
Among the demons of the earth
With groans that make the mountain shake,
Thou mourn thy ill-starr'd blighted birth;
Or in the uncreated void,
Where seeds of future being fight
With lessen'd step thou wander wide,
To greet thy Mother—Ancient Night,
And as each jarring, monster-mass is past,
Fond recollect what once thou wast:
In manner due, beneath this sacred oak,
Hear, Spirit, hear! thy presence I invoke!
By a Monarch's heaven-struck fate,
By a disunited State,
By a generous Prince's wrongs,
By a Senate's strife of tongues,
By a Premier's sullen pride,
Louring on the changing tide;
By dread Thurlow's powers to awe—
Rhetoric, blasphemy and law;
By the turbulent ocean—
A Nation's commotion,
By the harlot-caresses
Of borough addresses
By days few and evil,
(Thy portion poor devil!)
By Power, Wealth, and Show,
(The gods by men adored,)
By nameless Poverty,
(Their hell abhorred,)
By all they hope and all they fear,
Hear! and Appear!

Stare not on me, thou ghastly Power!
Nor, grim with chain'd defiance, lour:
No Babel-structure would *I* build
Where, order exil'd from his native sway,
Confusion may the Regent-sceptre wield,
While all would rule and none obey:
Go, to the world of Man relate
The story of thy sad, eventful fate;
And call presumptuous Hope to hear,
And bid him check his wild career;
And tell the sore-prest sons of Care
Never, never to despair!

Paint Charles's speed on wings of fire,
The object of his fond desire,
Beyond his boldest hopes, at hand:
Paint all the triumph of the Portland band;
Mark how they lift the joy-exulting voice,
And how their numerous creditors rejoice;
But just as hopes to warm enjoyment rise,
Cry Convalescence! and the vision flies.

Then next pourtray a dark'ning twilight gloom,
Eclipsing sad a gay, rejoicing morn,
While proud Ambition to th' untimely tomb
By gnashing, grim, despairing fiends is borne:
Paint ruin, in the shape of high D[undas]
Gaping with giddy terror o'er the brow;
In vain he struggles, the Fates behind him press,
And clam'rous hell yawns for her prey below:
How fallen *That*, whose pride late scaled the skies,
And *This*, like Lucifer, no more to rise!
Again pronounce the powerful word;
See Day, triumphant from the night, restored.

Then know this truth, ye Sons of Men!
(Thus ends my moral tale,)
Your darkest terrors may be vain,
Your brightest hopes may fail.

A NEW PSALM FOR THE CHAPEL OF KILMARNOCK,

ON THE THANKSGIVING DAY FOR HIS MAJESTY'S RECOVERY.

In a letter to Mrs. Dunlop (4th May, 1789) the poet says:—"As I am not devoutly attached to a certain monarch, I cannot say my heart ran any risk of bursting, on Thursday was se'ennight. . . . I must say that I look on the whole business as a solemn farce of pageant mummery. The following are a few stanzas of new psalmody for that 'joyful solemnity,' which I sent to a London newspaper, with the date and preface following:—'Kilmarnock, 25th April. Mr. Printer, In a certain chapel not fifty leagues from the market cross of this good town, the following stanzas of psalmody, it is said, were composed for, and devoutly sung on, the late joyful solemnity of the 23d.'" The occasion of the public thanksgiving was the king's temporary recovery from mental alienation. See note to preceding piece.

O sing a new song to the Lord,
Make all and every one,
A joyful noise, even for the king
His restoration.

The sons of Belial in the land
Did set their heads together;
Come, let us sweep them off, said they,
Like an o'erflowing river.

They set their heads together, I say,
  They set their heads together,
On right, on left, and every hand,
  We saw none to deliver.

Thou madest strong two chosen ones,
  To quell the Wicked's pride;
That Young Man great in Issachar,[1]
  The burden-bearing tribe.

And him, among the Princes chief
  In our Jerusalem,
The Judge that's mighty in Thy law,
  The man that fears thy name.[2]

Yet they, even they, with all their strength,
  Began to faint and fail;
Even as two howling, ravening wolves
  To dogs do turn their tail.

Th' ungodly o'er the just prevailed,
  For so thou hadst appointed;
That Thou might'st greater glory give
  Unto Thine own anointed.

And now Thou hast restored our State,
  Pity our Kirk also;
For she by tribulations
  Is now brought very low.

Consume that high-place Patronage,
  From off Thy holy hill;
And in Thy fury burn the book
  Even of that man M'Gill.[3]

Now hear our pray'r, accept our song,
  And fight Thy chosen's battle:
We seek but little, Lord, from Thee,
  Thou kens we get as little.[4]

[1] William Pitt.

[2] Here there is evidently a reference to Lord Chancellor Thurlow's notorious habit of profane swearing, and no doubt also to the fact that his knowledge of law was not considered very great.

[3] Dr. M'Gill of Ayr, whose *Essay on the Death of Jesus Christ* was condemned by the Evangelical party as having a Socinian tendency. See the "Kirk's Alarm."

[4] This clever caricature of the Scottish metrical version of the Psalms was inclosed in the letter to Mrs. Dunlop containing the "Fragment" which next follows. Currie, from motives of prudence, gave only a portion of the letter, and endorsed the document thus—"Psalm on the King's Restoration *not to be printed.*" The entire letter, with the inclosed psalm, was first printed in Dr. P. Hately Waddell's edition of Burns, 1870, from the original MS. in the possession of George Manners, Esq., F.S.A., Croydon, London. By a clerical error Burns dates the letter 4th April, 1789, instead of 4th May.——The London newspaper to which Burns says he sent this piece was no doubt the *Star*, the editor of which was Mr. Peter Stuart. With Mr. Stuart Burns had been for some time acquainted: he corresponded with him as early as February, 1787, and sent him several of his productions for insertion in his paper. See also note to "Delia," on third page from this.

FRAGMENT,

INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON. C. J. FOX.

From Ellisland, on May 4th, 1789, Burns wrote to Mrs. Dunlop:—"I have a poetic whim in my head, which I at present dedicate, or rather inscribe, to the Right Hon. Charles James Fox; but how long that fancy may hold I cannot say." See last note.

How Wisdom and Folly meet, mix, and unite;
How Virtue and Vice blend their black and their white;
How genius, the illustrious father of fiction,
Confounds rule and law, reconciles contradiction—
I sing: If these mortals, the critics, should bustle,
I care not, not I, let the critics go whistle.

But now for a Patron, whose name and whose glory
At once may illustrate and honour my story.

Thou first of our orators, first of our wits;
Yet whose parts and acquirements seem mere lucky hits;
With knowledge so vast, and with judgment so strong,
No man with the half of 'em e'er could go wrong;
With passions so potent, and fancies so bright,
No man with the half of 'em e'er could go right;
A sorry, poor misbegot son of the Muses,
For using thy name offers fifty excuses.

Good L—d, what is Man! for as simple he looks,
Do but try to develop his hooks and his crooks;
With his depths and his shallows, his good and his evil,
All in all he's a problem must puzzle the devil.

On his one ruling passion Sir Pope hugely labours,
That, like th' old Hebrew walking-switch, eats up its neighbours:
Mankind are his show-box—a friend, would you know him?
Pull the string, Ruling passion the picture will show him.
What pity, in rearing so beauteous a system,
One trifling particular, *Truth*, should have miss'd him;
For, spite of his fine theoretic positions,
Mankind is a science defies definitions.

Some sort all our qualities each to his tribe,
And think human nature they truly describe;
Have you found this, or t'other? there's more in the wind,
As by one drunken fellow his comrades you'll find.
But such is the flaw, or the depth of the plan,
In the make of that wonderful creature, call'd Man,
No two virtues, whatever relation they claim,
Nor even two different shades of the same,
Though like as was ever twin brother to brother,
Possessing the one shall imply you've the other.

But truce with abstraction, and truce with a Muse,
Whose rhymes you'll perhaps, Sir, ne'er deign to peruse;
Will you leave your justings, your jars, and your quarrels,
Contending with Billy for proud-nodding laurels?
My much honour'd patron, believe your poor Poet,
Your courage much more than your prudence you show it;
In vain with Squire Billy for laurels you struggle,
He'll have them by fair trade, if not, he will smuggle;
Not cabinets even of kings would conceal 'em,
He'd up the back-stairs, and by G— he would steal 'em.
Then feats like Squire Billy's you ne'er can achieve 'em,
It is not, outdo him, the task is, out-thieve him.

ON SEEING A WOUNDED HARE LIMP BY ME,

WHICH A FELLOW HAD JUST SHOT AT.

To Alexander Cunningham Burns writes, 4th May, 1789:—"I have just put the last hand to a little poem, which, I think, will be something to your taste:—One morning lately, as I was out pretty early in the fields, sowing some grass-seeds, I heard the burst of a shot from a neighbouring plantation, and presently a poor little wounded hare came crippling by me. You will guess my indignation at the inhuman fellow who could shoot a hare at this season, when all of them have young ones. Indeed, there is something in this business of destroying, for our sport, individuals in the animal creation that do not injure us materially, which I could never reconcile to my ideas of virtue. . . . Let me know how you like my poem. I am doubtful whether it would not be an improvement to keep out the last stanza but one altogether."

Inhuman man! curse on thy barb'rous art,
And blasted be thy murder-aiming eye:
May never pity soothe thee with a sigh,
Nor ever pleasure glad thy cruel heart!

Go live, poor wand'rer of the wood and field,
The bitter little that of life remains:
No more the thickening brakes and verdant plains
To thee shall home, or food, or pastime yield.

Seek, mangled wretch, some place of wonted rest—
No more of rest, but now thy dying bed!
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy bloody bosom prest.[1]

Perhaps a mother's anguish adds its woe,
The playful pair crowd fondly by thy side;
Ah! helpless nurslings, who will now provide
That life a mother only can bestow.

[1] The third verse originally stood as follows:—

Seek, mangled innocent, some wonted form,
That wonted form alas! thy dying bed,
The sheltering rushes whistling o'er thy head,
The cold earth with thy blood-stained bosom warm.

In the closing verse for "ruffian's aim" the original reading was "ruthless wretch."

Burns submitted the "Wounded Hare" to Dr. Gregory for his criticism. The doctor "spared no arrows." As a curiosity we give his remarks:—"The 'Wounded

Oft as by winding Nith, I, musing, wait
The sober eve, or hail the cheerful dawn,
I'll miss thee sporting o'er the dewy lawn,
And curse the ruffian's aim, and mourn thy hapless fate.

DELIA.[1]

AN ODE.

Fair the face of orient day,
Fair the tints of op'ning rose;
But fairer still my Delia dawns,
More lovely far her beauty glows.

Hare' is a pretty good subject; but the measure or stanza you have chosen for it is not a good one; it does not *flow* well; and the rhyme of the fourth line is almost lost by its distance from the first, and the two interposed, close rhymes. If I were you, I would put it into a different stanza yet. Stanza 1. The execrations in the first two lines are too strong or coarse; but they may pass. 'Murder-aiming' is a bad compound epithet, and not very intelligible. 'Blood-stained,' in stanza iii. line 4, has the very same fault; *bleeding* bosom is infinitely better. You have accustomed yourself to such epithets, and have no notion how stiff and quaint they appear to others, and how incongruous with poetic fancy and tender sentiments. Suppose Pope had written, 'Why that blood-stained bosom gored,' how would you have liked it? *Form* is neither a poetic, nor a dignified, nor a plain common word; it is a mere sportsman's word; unsuitable to pathetic or serious poetry. 'Mangled' is a coarse word. 'Innocent,' in this sense, is a nursery word, but both may pass. Stanza 4. 'Who will now provide that life a mother only can bestow?" will not do at all: it is not grammar—it is not intelligible. Do you mean, 'provide for that life which the mother had bestowed and used to provide for?'"

"It must be admitted," says Currie, "that this criticism is not more distinguished by its good sense than by its freedom from ceremony. It is impossible not to smile at the manner in which the poet may be supposed to have received it. In fact, it appears, as the sailors say, to have thrown him *quite aback*. In a letter which he wrote soon after, he says, 'Dr. Gregory is a good man, but he crucifies me.'—And again, 'I believe in the iron justice of Dr. Gregory; but, like the devils, I believe and tremble.' However, he profited by these criticisms, as the reader will find by comparing the first edition of this piece with that subsequently published."——Most readers will probably be a little doubtful as to the extent by which Burns "profited," when they learn that the criticism finally decided him to omit the fourth verse given above.

A note of Motherwell's in Allan Cunningham's edition runs thus:—"This poem, like most of the productions of Burns, is founded on fact. James Thomson, whose father occupied a farm adjoining to that of Ellisland, has stated that once in the gloaming he shot at, and hurt a hare, which, like that of Gray, had come forth

To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn.

Burns was walking on Nithside, the hare ran bleeding by him; 'upon which,' said Thomson, 'he cursed me, and said he would not mind throwing me into the water; and I'll warrant he could hae don't, though I was both young and strong.'" Apart from the fact, known especially from the "Brigs of Ayr," that the poet regarded the sportsman's craft with abhorrence, notwithstanding his jocular allusions to it in "Tam Samson's Elegy," and never himself engaged in it, the reminiscence of James Thomson is of little illustrative value as regards the present poem. Burns saw this wounded hare early in the morning, while Thomson's adventure (if it took place at all) took place in the gloaming.

[1] This is an imitation of the Della Cruscan style of poetry which came into vogue towards the close of the 18th century, and which Gifford was so instrumental in demolishing. Burns is said to have sent the piece to the London *Star* newspaper (see note p. 147), and he afterwards received that paper gratuitously from the publisher. The letter to the editor in which this ode is said to have been inclosed is as follows:—"To the editor of the *Star*.—Mr. Printer—If the productions of a simple ploughman can merit a place in the same paper with Sylvester Otway, and the other favourites of the Muses who illuminate the *Star* with the lustre of genius, your insertion of the enclosed trifle will be succeeded by future communications from—Yours, &c., R. Burns. Ellisland, near Dumfries, 18th May, 1789." This looks circumstantial enough, but the "ode" is a most un-Burns-like production. There is a story to the effect that the verses were produced almost impromptu by Burns at Brownhill Inn, in Nithsdale (a hostelry at which he often called), to prove that he could compose lines as effeminate as any "person of quality."

Sweet the lark's wild-warbled lay,
Sweet the tinkling rill to hear;
But, Delia, more delightful still,
Steal thine accents on mine ear.

The flower-enamour'd busy bee
The rosy banquet loves to sip;
Sweet the streamlet's limpid lapse
To the sun-brown'd Arab's lip;

But, Delia, on thy balmy lips
Let me, no vagrant insect, rove!
O let me steal one liquid kiss,
For Oh! my soul is parch'd with love!

SONG—BLOOMING NELLY.[1]

TUNE—"*On a Bank of Flowers.*"

On a bank of flowers, in a summer day,
For summer lightly dress'd,
The youthful blooming Nelly lay,
With love and sleep oppress'd;
When Willy, wand'ring thro' the wood,
Who for her favour oft had sued,
He gaz'd, he wish'd, he fear'd, he blush'd,
And trembled where he stood.

Her closèd eyes, like weapons sheath'd,
Were seal'd in soft repose,
Her lips still as they fragrant breath'd,
It richer dyed the rose,
The springing lilies sweetly press'd,
Wild-wanton kiss'd her rival breast;
He gaz'd, he wish'd, he fear'd, he blush'd,
His bosom ill at rest.

Her robes, light waving in the breeze,
Her tender limbs embrace,
Her lovely form, her native ease,
All harmony and grace.
Tumultuous tides his pulses roll,
A faltering ardent kiss he stole;
He gaz'd, he wish'd, he fear'd, he blush'd,
And sigh'd his very soul.

As flies the partridge from the brake,
On fear-inspirèd wings;

[1] The incident and some of the expressions of this song have been borrowed from a rather voluptuous ditty by Mr. Theobald in the first volume of Allan Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany.*

So Nelly startling, half awake,
Away affrighted springs.
But Willy follow'd as he should,
He overtook her in the wood;
He vow'd, he pray'd, he found the maid
Forgiving all, and good.

SONG—THE GARD'NER WI' HIS PAIDLE.

TUNE—"*The Gardener's March.*"

"The title of the song only is old," says Burns in his notes to the *Museum*, "the rest is mine."[1]

When rosy May comes in wi' flowers,
To deck her gay green-spreading bowers,
Then busy, busy are his hours—
The gard'ner wi' his paidle. hoe

The crystal waters gently fa';
The merry birds are lovers a';
The scented breezes round him blaw—
The gard'ner wi' his paidle.

When purple morning starts the hare
To steal upon her early fare,
Then thro' the dews he maun repair— must
The gard'ner wi' his paidle.

When day, expiring in the west,
The curtain draws of nature's rest,
He flies to her arms he lo'es best—
The gard'ner wi' his paidle.

SONG—YOUNG JOCKEY.[2]

TUNE—"*Young Jockey.*"

Young Jockey was the blythest lad
In a' our town or here awa'; hereabout
Fu' blythe he whistled at the gaud, goad (=plough or team)
Fu' lightly danc'd he in the ha'!
He roos'd my een sae bonnie blue, praised eyes
He roos'd my waist sae genty sma'; so neat and small

[1] He afterwards recast the song for Thomson's collection, among other changes being the cutting away the awkward and prosaic refrain which gives the title to the song, and furnishing it with a chorus which associates it with the old air "Dainty Davie." See the later version at p. 81, vol. iii.

[2] This song, written for the *Museum* to an air in Oswald's *Caledonian Pocket Companion*, was marked by Johnson with the letter Z, to denote that it was an old one with additions. But according to Stenhouse the whole of it, except three or four lines, is the production of Burns.

An' aye my heart cam to my mou', always
When ne'er a body heard or saw. person

My Jockey toils upon the plain,
Thro' wind an' weet, thro' frost and snaw; wet
And o'er the lea I leuk fu' fain, look
When Jockey's owsen hameward ca'. oxen are driven
An' aye the night comes roun' again, always
When in his arms he taks me a':
An' aye he vows he'll be my ain, own
As lang's he has a breath to draw.

SONG—JAMIE, COME TRY ME.[1]

TUNE—"*Jamie, come try me.*"

Jamie, come try me,
Jamie, come try me;
If thou would win my love,
Jamie, come try me.

If thou should ask my love,
Could I deny thee?
If thou would win my love,
Jamie, come try me.
Jamie, come try me, &c.

If thou should kiss me, love,
Wha could espy thee?
If thou wad be my love,
Jamie, come try me.
Jamie, come try me, &c.

SONG—THE BANKS OF NITH.[2]

The Thames flows proudly to the sea,
Where royal cities stately stand;

[1] The words were written by Burns for the third volume of Johnson's *Museum*, and to an air said to be composed by Oswald, and published in his *Caledonian Pocket Companion* prior to 1742.

[2] This song, contributed to the *Museum*, we are informed by Stenhouse, "was intended to depict the feelings of an inhabitant of Nithsdale, then residing in London, reflecting upon the innocent scenes of his youthful days on the banks of the river Nith."—The tune was composed by Riddell of Glenriddell.—The poet's familiarity with the river Nith was probably not very great until he removed from Ayrshire to Dumfriesshire (in 1788), where, for the first few years, he lived at his farm of Ellisland, afterwards removing (in 1791) to the county town Dumfries, where he died. Great part of its course presents many pleasing and picturesque features—"exquisitely rich in many varieties of landscape, now exhibiting a narrow acclivitous pass, diversified with wood, escarpment, and rock, now bursting into an expanse of valley, blooming as a garden, and screened with warm-coloured and finely outlined mountain-heights, and now presenting such rapid alternations of slope, undulation, haugh, and hill, as charm and surprise the eye by the mingled wealth and number of the transitions. . . . Nowhere is the magnificence . . . of the famous Solway 'bore' displayed with finer effect than in the estuary of the Nith."—*Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland.*

But sweeter flows the Nith to me,
Where Cummins[1] ance had high command: once
When shall I see that honour'd land,
That winding stream I love sae dear!
Must wayward fortune's adverse hand
For ever, ever keep me here?

How lovely, Nith, thy fruitful vales,
Where spreading hawthorns gaily bloom!
How sweetly wind thy sloping dales,
Where lambkins wanton thro' the broom!
Tho' wandering, now, must be my doom,
Far frae thy bonnie banks and braes, slopes
May there my latest hours consume,
Amang the friends of early days!

THE SELKIRK GRACE.

SPOKEN AT THE TABLE OF THE EARL OF SELKIRK

Some hae meat, and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
And sae the Lord be thankit.[2]

SONG—TIBBIE DUNBAR.[3]

TUNE—"*Johnny M'Gill.*"

O, wilt thou go wi' me,
Sweet Tibbie Dunbar?
O, wilt thou go wi' me,
Sweet Tibbie Dunbar?
Wilt thou ride on a horse,
Or be drawn in a car,
Or walk by my side,
O sweet Tibbie Dunbar?

I care na thy daddie
His lands and his money,

[1] More correctly Comyns, the name being from the French family name De Comines. The Red Comyn stabbed by Robert Bruce at Dumfries was one of this family, formerly among the most powerful in Scotland.

[2] Burns *may*, as is said, have repeated this at Lord Selkirk's table. But the probability is that it was current at the time among the peasantry. Its authorship is scarcely worth disputing about; indeed such scraps of rhyme might very well be omitted from editions of Burns's works.

[3] This song seems to have been produced by Burns and sent to Johnson's *Museum* for the purpose of preserving the rather sprightly, yet vigorous air, commonly credited to John M'Gill, a musician of Girvan, Ayrshire; it is however claimed by the Irish. Hector M'Neill's song "Come under my plaidie" is set to the same air."

I care na thy kin,
Sae high and sae lordly:
But say thou wilt hae me
For better for waur—
And come in thy coatie,
Sweet Tibbie Dunbar!

SONG—THE CAPTAIN'S LADY.[1]

TUNE—"*O Mount and go.*"

O mount and go,
Mount and make you ready;
O mount and go,
And be the captain's lady.

When the drums do beat,
And the cannons rattle,
Thou shalt sit in state,
And see thy love in battle.
O mount and go, &c.

When the vanquish'd foe
Sues for peace and quiet,
To the shades we'll go,
And in love enjoy it.
O mount and go, &c.

SONG—JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.[2]

TUNE—"*John Anderson, my jo.*"

John Anderson, my jo, John, dear
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent; smooth

[1] Stenhouse has the following note:—"The verses in the *Museum* beginning 'O mount and go,' were communicated by Burns; and although he does not acknowledge them I have good reason to believe they were his own." Mr. Scott Douglas says: "We can well believe it (that is, that the words are Burns's), for they evince his usual force." To us the song seems so trivial that it does not much matter to whom it may be ascribed. An old ditty called by the same title as Burns's song is quoted in the *Museum*. It begins:

I will away, and I will not tarry,
I will away, and be a captain's lady.

The quaint old air is found in Oswald's *Caledonian Pocket Companion* under the title of "Mount your Baggage."

[2] "John Anderson, my jo" is founded on an old song, set to an air which is said to have been a piece of sacred music previous to the Reformation. In Johnson's *Museum* the hero of the song is, from tradition, said to have been the town-piper of Kelso. In the *Scots Magazine* for 1797, and again in an old collection of poetry published by Brash and Reid of Glasgow, is given what is called an improved version of this song, said to be from the pen of Burns. It consists of eight stanzas, of which the two given in our text form the sixth and eighth respectively. Currie pronounced the additional stanzas spurious. Allan Cunningham, on the other hand, thought he discovered traces of Burns's pen in the second stanza. The additions, it appears, were made by William Reid, who also attempted to enlarge the song entitled, "Of

But now your brow is beld, John, bald
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow, head
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither; together
And mony a cantie day, John, cheerful
We've had wi' ane anither:
Now we maun totter down, John, must
And hand in hand we'll go,
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

SONG—MY LOVE SHE'S BUT A LASSIE YET.[1]

TUNE—"*Lady Badinscoth's Reel.*"

My love she's but a lassie yet,
My love she's but a lassie yet;
We'll let her stand a year or twa,
She'll no be half sae saucy yet.

I rue the day I sought her, O,
I rue the day I sought her, O;
Wha gets her needs na say she's woo'd,
But he may say he's bought her, O!

Come, draw a drap o' the best o't yet,
Come, draw a drap o' the best o't yet;
Gae seek for pleasure where ye will,
But here I never miss'd it yet.

We're a' dry wi' drinking o't,
We're a' dry wi' drinking o't;
The minister kiss'd the fiddler's wife,
And couldna preach for thinkin' o't.

a' the airts the wind can blaw." As some of the stanzas of this version of "John Anderson, my jo," are occasionally mingled up, in singing, with the undoubted production of Burns, we give the first and second of them here.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
I wonder what you mean,
To rise so soon in the morning,
And sit up so late at e'en;
Ye'll blear out a' your een, John,
And why should you do so?
Gang sooner to your bed at e'en,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John.
When Nature first began
To try her cannie hand, John,
Her master-work was man;
And you amang them a', John,
Sae trig frae tap to toe,
She prov'd to be nae journey-work,
John Anderson, my jo.

The latter of the above seems to be inspired by recollections of one of the stanzas of "Green grow the rashes." Some of Mr. Reid's imitations or additions of other songs were published, it is said, with Burns's consent or knowledge. We think this extremely doubtful.

[1] Stenhouse says the title and last four lines of this song are old, the latter forming a part of an old version of "Green grow the rashes," quoted by Herd.

SONG—TAM GLEN.[1]

TUNE—"*Tam Glen.*"

My heart is a-breaking, dear tittie! sister
Some counsel unto me come len',
To anger them a' is a pity,
But what will I do wi' Tam Glen?

I'm thinkin', wi' sic a braw fellow, such fine
In poortith I might mak' a fen': poverty shift
What care I in riches to wallow,
If I maunna marry Tam Glen? must not

There's Lowrie, the laird o' Drummeller, owner (squire)
"Guid day to you, brute!"[2] he comes ben: in
He brags and he blaws o' his siller, boasts money
But when will he dance like Tam Glen?

My minnie does constantly deave me, mother deafen
And bids me beware o' young men;
They flatter, she says, to deceive me;
But wha can think sae o' Tam Glen?

My daddie says, gin I'll forsake him, if
He'll gie me guid hunder marks ten:
But if it's ordain'd I maun take him, must
O wha will I get but Tam Glen?

Yestreen at the Valentines' dealing, last night
My heart to my mou' gied a sten; gave a bound
For thrice I drew ane without failing, one
And thrice it was written—Tam Glen.[3]

The last Halloween I was waukin' watching
My droukit sark-sleeve, as ye ken; drenched shift-sleeve know
His likeness cam up the house stalkin',
And the very grey breeks o' Tam Glen![4] breeches

Come counsel, dear tittie! don't tarry—
I'll gie you my bonnie black hen,

[1] This, which is called by Lockhart with justice one of the best of Burns's humorous songs, was sent by the poet to the *Museum* along with a very ancient air of the same name. The tune it is now usually sung to, however, is known as the "Muckin' o' Geordie's Byre;" it suits very happily the rhythm and sentiment of the song.

[2] We give this salutation as printed in Johnson's *Museum*. We are by no means sure, however, that the quotation marks are correctly placed. Perhaps it would be better to put it thus: "'Guid day to you,' brute!" making the lady apply the unflattering epithet to her importunate and unwelcome suitor; for we can hardly think the laird would have been so rude as to apply it to her.

[3] This is an allusion to the old custom of a number of young lads and lasses meeting together on St. Valentine's Eve, and writing upon little billets the names of an equal number of the young men and women of their acquaintance, throwing the whole into a receptacle of some sort, and then drawing them lottery-wise, arrangements having been made that each drew one of the opposite sex. The person then drawn became one's valentine.

[4] See note to "Halloween," where there is an explanation of this.

Gif ye will advise me to marry — if
The lad I lo'e dearly, Tam Glen.

SONG—WHISTLE O'ER THE LAVE O'T.[1]

TUNE—"*Whistle o'er the lave o't.*"

First when Maggy was my care,
Heav'n, I thought, was in her air;
Now we're married—spier nae mair— — ask no more
Whistle o'er the lave o't.— — rest
Meg was meek, and Meg was mild,
Sweet and harmless as a child;[2]
—Wiser men than me's beguil'd—
Whistle o'er the lave o't.

How we live, my Meg and me,
How we love and how we 'gree,
I care na by how few may see; — care not a whit
Whistle o'er the lave o't.
Wha I wish were maggot's meat,
Dish'd up in her winding sheet,
I could write—but Meg maun see't— — must
Whistle o'er the lave o't.

SONG—THERE'S A YOUTH IN THIS CITY.

To a Gaelic Air.

"This air," says Burns, in his notes on Johnson's *Museum*, "is claimed by Neil Gow, who calls it his lament for his brother. The first half stanza of the song is old. The rest is mine."

There's a youth in this city,
It were a great pity,
That he from our lasses should wander awa';
For he's bonnie and braw, — well-dressed
Weel-favour'd wi' a',
And his hair has a natural buckle an' a'.
His coat is the hue
Of his bonnet sae blue;
His fecket[3] is white as the new driven snaw;
His hose they are blae, — bluish
And his shoon like the slae, — sloe
And his clear siller buckles they dazzle us a'.

[1] This humorous song was written in 1789 for Johnson s *Museum* (vol. iii.) as a substitute for some witty but indelicate verses, to a popular air, "Whistle o'er the lave o't," said to have been composed about 1720 by John Bruce, a Dumfries musician.

[2] Another reading of this line is:—
Bonnie Meg was Nature's child.

[3] *Fecket*, probably a waistcoat.

"A fine, fat, fodgel wight,
O' stature short, but genius bright."
—ON CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINATIONS THRO' SCOTLAND.

Sheppherson

"A fine, fat, fodgel wight,
O'stature short, but genius bright."

For beauty and fortune,
The laddie's been courtin';
Weel-featured, weel-tocher'd, weel-mounted, and braw: -dowered
But chiefly the siller,— money
That gars him gang till her, makes
The penny's the jewel that beautifies a'.
There's Meg wi' the mailen, farm
That fain wad a ha'en him, would have had
And Susy, whase daddy was laird o' the ha'; squire
There's lang-tocher'd Nancy, well-dowered
Maist fetters his fancy,
—But the laddie's dear sel' he lo'es dearest of a'.

SONG—EPPIE ADAIR.[1]

TUNE—"*My Eppie.*"

And O! my Eppie,
My jewel, my Eppie!
Wha wadna be happy
Wi' Eppie Adair?
By love, and by beauty,
By law, and by duty,
I swear to be true to
My Eppie Adair!

And O! my Eppie,
My jewel, my Eppie!
Wha wadna be happy
Wi' Eppie Adair?
A' pleasure exile me,
Dishonour defile me,
If e'er I beguile thee,
My Eppie Adair!

ON CAPTAIN GROSE'S PEREGRINATIONS THRO' SCOTLAND,

COLLECTING THE ANTIQUITIES OF THAT KINGDOM.[4]

Hear, Land o' Cakes, and brither Scots,
Frae Maidenkirk[2] to Johnie Groat's[3]; from
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede you tent it: advise take heed to

[1] Burns composed these verses for the *Museum* to suit what Stenhouse calls a pretty air which appeared in Oswald's *Caledonian Pocket Companion* under the title of "My Eppie."

[2] Kirkmaiden, in Wigtownshire, the most southerly parish in Scotland.

[3] Or John o' Groats, near the north-eastern extremity of the mainland of Scotland.

[4] Francis Grose was the son of a Swiss jeweller settled in England, and appears to have been born about the year 1730, in the county of Middlesex. A good education, respectable talents, and an indepen-

A chield's amang you taking notes, fellow
And, faith, he'll prent it.

If in your bounds ye chance to light
Upon a fine, fat, fodgel wight, squat and plump
O' stature short, but genius bright,
That's he, mark weel—
And vow! he has an unco sleight wonderful skill
O' cauk and keel.[1] chalk ruddle

By some auld, houlet-haunted biggin',[2] owl- building
Or kirk deserted by its riggin', roof
It's ten to ane ye'll find him snug in
Some eldritch part, awe-inspiring
Wi' deils, they say, L—d save's! colleaguin'
At some black art.—

Ilk ghaist that haunts auld ha' or cham'er, each ghost hall
Ye gipsy-gang that deal in glamour,
And you deep read in hell's black grammar,
Warlocks and witches;
Ye'll quake at his conjuring hammer,
Ye midnight b——es.

It's tauld he was a sodger bred, told
And ane wad rather fa'n than fled; one who would fallen
But now he's quat the spurtle-blade[3] quitted the sword
And dog-skin wallet,
And ta'en the—Antiquarian trade,
I think they call it.

dency left to him by his father, enabled him to enter life with the happiest prospects. His taste for antiquarian pursuits manifested itself early and led to his holding for a time the office of Richmond Herald in the Heralds' College. This he gave up, however, and having become adjutant and paymaster of the Hampshire militia, he is said to have kept no other accounts than his two pockets, receiving into the one, and paying from the other; at the same time, he had all the habits of a *bon-vivant*—the consequences of all which were, that he spent his competency and became a poor man, and an extremely fat one, much about the same time. Under the strong compulsion of poverty, he began a career as an artist and antiquary, for which his talents and acquirements were not unfitted. Between 1773 and 1788 he had produced his *Antiquities of England and Wales* in six volumes quarto, consisting of nearly six hundred views drawn by himself, and a large amount of letterpress; his *Treatise on Ancient Armour and Weapons*, in two volumes quarto; and his *Military Antiquities, respecting a History of the English Army, from the Conquest to the Present Time*, in two volumes quarto; together with several works of a light and whimsical nature, inclusive of his well-known Slang Dictionary *(Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue)*. It was in 1789, while travelling in Scotland, for the purpose of drawing and chronicling the antiquities of that country, that he met with Burns at the hospitable table of Mr. Riddell in the mansion of Friars' Carse. The Falstaffian figure of the man—his numberless droll remarks and stories—and, in perhaps a less degree, his great learning and shrewd penetrating sense—made a strong impression on the poet: and, like Burns's "Twa Dogs," the two became "unco pack and thick thegither." The intimacy was a memorable one for the admirers of Burns, for it led to the composition of "Tam o' Shanter," which first appeared in the *Antiquities of Scotland*, completed in 1791, in two volumes. See notes to "Tam o' Shanter." Grose died suddenly of apoplexy, in Dublin, May 12, 1791. He was married and had a family.

[1] That is to say, skill as a draughtsman with white and red chalk.

[2] *Vide* his *Antiquities of Scotland*.—(R. B. 1793.)

[3] A jocular term for a sword. In Scotland the term *spurtle* is applied to a stick for stirring oatmeal porridge; it is also the name of a flattish iron implement for turning oatmeal cakes that are being fired on the "girdle."

He has a fouth o' auld nick-nackets: abundance knick-knacks
Rusty airn caps and jinglin' jackets,[1] iron
Wad haud the Lothians three in tackets, would keep hob-nails
A towmont guid; twelvemonth
And parritch-pats, and auld saut-backets, porridge-pots salt-boxes
Before the Flood.

Of Eve's first fire he has a cinder;
Auld Tubal Cain's fire-shool and fender; fire-shovel
That which distinguishèd the gender
O' Balaam's ass;
The broom-stick o' the witch of Endor,
Weel shod wi' brass.

Forbye, he'll shape you aff, fu' gleg, besides cleverly
The cut of Adam's philibeg; kilt
The knife that nicket Abel's craig cut throat
He'll prove you fully,
It was a faulding jocteleg,[2] folding knife
Or lang-kail gullie. knife for cutting greens

But wad ye see him in his glee, would
For meikle glee and fun has he,
Then set him down, and twa or three
Guid fellows wi' him;
And port, O port! shine thou a wee, a little
And then ye'll see him!

Now, by the pow'rs o' verse and prose!
Thou art a dainty chield, O Grose!— fine fellow
Whae'er o' thee shall ill suppose,
They sair misca' thee; sore abuse
I'd take the rascal by the nose,
Wad say, "Shame fa' thee."

ON CAPTAIN GROSE.[3]

The Devil got notice that Grose was a-dying,
So whip! at the summons, old Satan came flying;
But when he approach'd where poor Francis lay moaning,
And saw each bed-post with its burden a-groaning,
Astonish'd! confounded! cry'd Satan, "By G—,
I'll want 'im, ere take such a damnable load."

[1] *Vide* his *Treatise on Ancient Armour and Weapons.* —(R. B. 1793.)

[2] A large pocket-knife, named from a famous cutler, *Jacques de Liége*, or James of Liége.

[3] The nature of the intimacy between Burns and Grose has been already narrated. In a moment of festivity Grose is said to have asked Burns to produce an epigram or epitaph on him. Burns eyed the antiquarian for a moment, and then hurled the above at him amid roars of laughter.

THE KIRK'S ALARM.[1]

A BALLAD.

TUNE—"*Push about the brisk bowl.*"

The period at which this piece was produced is known from a letter to Mr. Logan, the "Afton's Laird" of the postscript, dated 7th August, 1789, inclosing the poem, in which Burns says, "I have, as you will shortly see, finished 'The Kirk's Alarm;' but now that it is done, and that I have laughed once or twice at the conceits in some of the stanzas, I am determined not to let it get into the public; so I send you this copy, the first I have sent to Ayrshire (except some few of the stanzas which I wrote off in embryo for Gavin Hamilton), under the express provision and request, that you will only read it to *a few of us*, and do not on any account give, or permit to be taken, any copy of the ballad."

Orthodox, orthodox,[2] wha believe in John Knox,
Let me sound an alarm to your conscience,
There's a heretic blast has been blawn i' the wast,
That what is no sense must be nonsense,
Orthodox! That what is no sense must be nonsense.

Doctor Mac,[3] Doctor Mac, ye should stretch on a rack,
To strike evil doers[4] wi' terror;
To join faith and sense upon ony pretence,
Was heretic, damnable error,
Dr. Mac! 'Twas heretic, damnable error.

Town of Ayr,[5] town of Ayr, it was rash, I declare,
To meddle wi' mischief a-brewing:

[1] The title of this piece as given in the two holograph copies in the British Museum is "The Kirk of Scotland's Alarm; a Ballad." The name of the tune as given by the MS. in the Edinburgh monument is "Come rouse, Brother Sportsmen." Many holograph MSS. exist showing different arrangements in the stanzas and a great number of different readings, the more important of which are here given. The poem was written with reference to a case then pending in the church courts of Burns's native district. Dr. William M'Gill, one of the two ministers conjoined in the parochial charge of Ayr, had published in 1786 *A Practical Essay on the Death of Jesus Christ*, which was supposed to inculcate principles of both Arian and Socinian character, and provoked many severe censures. M'Gill remained silent under the attacks of his opponents, till Dr. William Peebles of Newton-upon-Ayr, a neighbour, in preaching a sermon in November, 1788, denounced the essay as heretical, and the author as one who "with one hand received the privileges of the church, while, with the other he was endeavouring to plunge the keenest poignard into her heart." M'Gill published a defence, which led, in April, 1789, to the introduction of the case into the presbyterial court of Ayr, and subsequently into that of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr. Meanwhile, the public out of doors were agitating the question with the keenest interest, and Burns took up his pen in behalf of M'Gill, of whom he expresses a high opinion, in a letter to Mr. Graham of Fintry, written in December, 1789. "I think you must have heard of Dr. M'Gill, one of the clergymen of Ayr, and his heretical book. God help him, poor man! Though he is one of the worthiest, as well as one of the ablest, of the whole priesthood of the Kirk of Scotland, in every sense of that ambiguous term, yet the poor Doctor and his numerous family are in imminent danger of being thrown out to the mercy of the winter winds." He is also praised in the poet's "Twa Herds." The war raged, till, in April, 1790, the case came on for trial before the synod, when M'Gill stopped further procedure by giving in a document, expressive of his deep regret for the disquiet he had occasioned, explaining the challenged passages of his book, and declaring his adherence to the standards of the church on the points of doctrine in question. Dr. M'Gill died March 30, 1807, at the age of seventy-six, and in the forty-sixth year of his ministry.

[2] In some MSS. "Brother Scots, brother Scots."

[3] Dr. M'Gill.

[4] In some MSS. "wicked writers."

[5] When Dr. M'Gill's case came before the synod, the magistrates of Ayr published an advertisement in the newspapers, bearing a warm testimony in favour of the doctor's character, and their appreciation of his services as a pastor.

Provost John[1] is still deaf to the church's relief,
And Orator Bob[2] is its ruin,
Town of Ayr! Yes, Orator Bob is its ruin.

D'rymple mild,[3] D'rymple mild, tho' your heart's like a child,
And your life like the new driven snaw,
Yet that winna save ye, auld Satan must have ye, will not
For preaching that three's ane an' twa,
D'rymple mild! For preaching that three's ane an' twa.

Calvin's sons, Calvin's sons, seize your spiritual guns,
Ammunition you never can need;
Your hearts are the stuff will be powder enough,
And your skulls are storehouses o' lead,
Calvin's sons! Your skulls are storehouses o' lead.

Rumble John,[4] Rumble John, mount the steps wi' a groan,
Cry the book is wi' heresy cramm'd:
Then lug out your ladle, deal brimstone like aidle, liquid manure
And roar ev'ry note of the damn'd,
Rumble John! And roar ev'ry note o' the damn'd.

Simper James,[5] Simper James, leave the fair Killie dames,
There's a holier chase in your view;
I'll lay on your head, that the pack ye'll soon lead,
For puppies like you there's but few,
Simper James! For puppies like you there's but few.

Singet Sawney,[6] Singet Sawney, are ye huirdin' the penny, singed
Unconscious what danger awaits? [hoarding
Wi' a jump, yell, and howl, alarm every soul,
For Hannibal's just at your gates,
Singet Sawney! For Hannibal's just at your gates.[7]

Daddy Auld,[8] Daddy Auld, there's a tod in the fauld, fox fold
A tod meikle waur than the clerk;[9] much worse

[1] John Ballantine, Esq., provost of Ayr, the same gentleman to whom the "Twa Brigs" is dedicated.

[2] Mr. Robert Aiken, writer in Ayr, to whom the "Cotter's Saturday Night" is inscribed. He exerted his powerful oratorical talents as agent for Dr. M'Gill in the presbytery and synod.

[3] The Rev. Dr. William Dalrymple, senior minister of the Collegiate church of Ayr (colleague of Dr. M'Gill)—a man of extraordinary meekness and worth. It is related of him, that one day meeting an almost naked beggar in the country, he took off his coat and waiscoat—gave the latter to the poor man, then put on his coat, buttoned it up, and walked home. He died in 1814, after having fulfilled his pastoral duties for sixty-eight years. One of his favourite tenets was the divisibility of the Trinity.

[4] The Rev. John Russell, Kilmarnock, celebrated in the "Holy Fair."

[5] The Rev. James M'Kinlay, Kilmarnock, the hero of the "Ordination."

[6] The Rev. Alexander Moodie of Riccarton, near Kilmarnock, one of the heroes of the "Twa Herds." "Singet" implies here puny, or dried-up-like.

[7] In some MSS. "the foul thief" takes the place of "Hannibal."

[8] The Rev. William Auld of Mauchline, who figures in the "Twa Herds" and elsewhere.

[9] The "clerk" was Mr. Gavin Hamilton, whose defence against the vexatious charges of Sabbath-breaking and other misdeeds, preferred by Mr. Auld, had occasioned much trouble to this clergyman. Of this controversy some account will be found in vol. ii. p. 10. In the Kilmarnock edition (1876), edited by William Scott Douglas, there is a note here which calls for some notice:—"The allusion to the *tod* in this verse has hitherto been unnoticed by commen-

Though ye can do little skaith, ye'll be in at the death,[1] hurt
And gif ye canna bite, ye may bark, if
Daddy Auld! Gif ye canna bite, ye may bark.

Davie Bluster,[2] Davie Bluster, for a saunt if ye muster, saint
The corps is no nice of recruits;
Yet to worth let's be just, royal blood ye might boast,
If the Ass were the king o' the brutes,
Davie Bluster! If the Ass were the king o' the brutes.

Jamie Goose,[3] Jamie Goose, ye hae made but toom roose, empty boast
In hunting the wicked lieutenant;
But the doctor's your mark, for the L—d's haly ark, holy
He has cooper'd and ca'd a wrang pin in't, driven
Jamie Goose! He has cooper'd and ca'd a wrang pin in't.

Poet Willie,[4] Poet Willie, gie the Doctor a volley,
Wi' your "Liberty's chain" and your wit;
O'er Pegasus' side ye ne'er laid a stride,
Ye but smelt, man, the place where he ——,
Poet Willie! Ye but smelt, man, the place where he ——.

Andro Gouk,[5] Andro Gouk, ye may slander the book,
And the book nane the waur, let me tell ye; none the worse
Tho' ye're rich, and look big, yet lay by hat and wig,
And ye'll hae a calf's head o' sma' value,
Andro Gouk! Ye'll hae a calf's head o' sma' value.

Barr Steenie,[6] Barr Steenie, what mean ye, what mean ye?
If ye'll meddle nae mair wi' the matter,
Ye may hae some pretence to havins and sense, good manners
Wi' people wha ken ye nae better, know
Barr Steenie! Wi' people that ken ye nae better.

tators. The Rev. John Tod of Mauchline, was son-in-law of Gavin Hamilton, Esq., here referred to as 'the clerk' who had teased Mr. Auld so much." This explanation will not hold good. Mr. Auld died December 12th, 1791, and was succeeded by the Rev. Archibald Reid, who died 25th April, 1803. He was succeeded by the Rev. John Todd, who, on March 3d, 1806, married Wilhelmina Kennedy, daughter of Gavin Hamilton, nearly seventeen years after the composition of the poem, and about ten years after the poet's death. See *Fasti Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ*, by Hew Scott, D.D., F.S.A.Sc., 1868. By the "tod" doubtless no other than Dr. M'Gill himself is intended.

[1] For this line one MS. has

Douglas, Heron, & Co. has e'en laid you fu' low.

Alluding to the disastrous failure of Douglas, Heron, & Co.'s bank, which brought ruin or severe loss on many Ayrshire families.

[2] The Rev. David Grant, Ochiltree.

[3] The Rev. James Young of New Cumnock. The "wicked lieutenant" was a Captain Hugh Mitchell, whose child Mr. Young refused to baptize, which caused one or two influential families to leave the church.

[4] The Rev. Dr. Peebles of Newton-upon-Ayr. He had excited some ridicule by a line in a poem on the centenary of the Revolution of 1688:—

And bound in Liberty's endearing chain."

The poetry of this gentleman is said to have been indifferent. It comprised *The Crisis; or the Progress of Revolutionary Principles;* odes and elegies, hymns, &c. He is also mentioned in the "Holy Fair" and the "Twa Herds." He is also said to have set up for a wit.

[5] Dr. Andrew Mitchell, Monkton. He was so rich as to be able to keep his carriage, and was very fond of money. He is called "gouk" by a play on words, this being both a Scottish surname and also the Scottish for cuckoo and for dolt or fool. Notwithstanding the antipathy he could scarcely help feeling towards Burns, it is said that some of the poet's comic verses would make him laugh heartily, and confess that, "after all, he was a droll fellow."

[6] Rev. Stephen Young, Barr.

Irvine-side,[1] Irvine-side, wi' your turkey-cock pride,
O' manhood but sma' is your share,
Ye've the figure, 'tis true, even your faes will allow, faes
And your friends daurna say you hae mair, dare not
Irvine-side! Your friends daurna say you hae mair.

Muirland Jock,[2] Muirland Jock, when the L—d makes a rock
To crush Common Sense for her sins,
If ill manners were wit, there's no mortal so fit
To confound the poor Doctor at ance, once
Muirland Jock! To confound the poor Doctor at ance.

Holy Will,[3] Holy Will, there was wit i' your skull,
When ye pilfer'd the alms o' the poor;
The timmer is scant, when ye're ta'en for a saunt, timber saint
Wha should swing in a rape for an hour, rope
Holy Will! Ye should swing in a rape for an hour.

Poet Burns, Poet Burns, wi' your priest-skelping turns, -beating
Why desert ye your auld native shire?
Your muse is a gypsy, yet were she e'en tipsy,
She could ca' us nae waur than we are, call us no worse
Poet Burns! She could ca' us nae waur than we are.

POSTSCRIPT.

Afton's Laird,[4] Afton's Laird, when your pen can be spar'd
A copy o' this I bequeath,
On the same sicker score I mention'd before, secure
To that trusty auld worthy Clackleith,[5]
Afton's Laird! To that trusty auld worthy Clackleith.[6]

[1] Rev. George Smith, Galston. This gentleman is praised in the "Holy Fair" for teaching the importance of morality in practice, and for his "English style and gesture fine." Mr. Smith seems to have taken offence at that praise, and this probably set the poet against him. In another version he is styled "Cessnock-side."

[2] Rev. John Shepherd, Muirkirk. He had a habit of saying rude things, which he mistook for wit, and thus laid himself open to the satire of the poet. In another version this verse commences thus:—

> Muirland George, Muirland George,
> Whom the L—d made a scourge,
> To claw Common Sense for her sins."

In the old *Statistical Account of Scotland*, edited by Sir John Sinclair, most of the ministers here mentioned appear as authors of the articles on their respective parishes.

[3] The Mauchline elder, William Fisher, the hero of "Holy Willie's Prayer."

[4] John Logan of Knockshinnoch, Glen Afton, Ayrshire. He appears in Burns's correspondence also as John Logan, Esq. of Laight, not far from Kilmarnock. He helped in the sale of Burns's Kilmarnock edition, but the poet does not seem to have become intimate with him till his removal to Ellisland.

[5] Mr. Johnston of Clackleith, a neighbour laird of Knockshinnoch's, evidently one of the "few of us" to whom this poem might be read. In a recently discovered memorandum to Provost Whigham of Sanquhar, Burns speaks of that "hearty veteran of original wit, and social iniquity,—Clackleith."

[6] In a copy preserved in the poet's monument at Edinburgh there is another Postscript:—

> Factor John, Factor John, whom the Lord made alone,
> And ne'er made anither, thy peer,
> Thy poor servant, the Bard, in respectful regard,
> He presents thee this token sincere.

There is some doubt as to "Factor John's" identity. Some think John Kennedy is meant, factor to the last Earl of Dumfries, to whom Burns inclosed a copy of the "Mountain Daisy," 20th April, 1786. Others have suggested that John Macmurdo, chamberlain of the Duke of Queensberry, at Drumlanrig, may be "Factor John," Burns being at this time on intimate terms with this gentleman's family.

TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY.

ON RECEIVING A FAVOUR, 10TH AUGUST, 1789.

I call no goddess to inspire my strains,
A fabled muse may suit a bard that feigns;
Friend of my life! my ardent spirit burns,
And all the tribute of my heart returns,
For boons accorded, goodness ever new,
The gift still dearer, as the giver you.

Thou orb of day! thou other paler light!
And all the other sparkling stars of night;
If aught that giver from my mind efface;
If I that giver's bounty e'er disgrace;
Then roll to me, along your wandering spheres,
Only to number out a villain's years!
I lay my hand upon my swelling breast,
And grateful would, but cannot speak the rest.[1]

SONG—WILLIE BREW'D A PECK O' MAUT.[2]

TUNE—"*Willie brew'd a peck o' maut.*'

"The air is Masterton's," says Burns in his notes to the Glenriddell copy of the *Museum*, "the song mine. The occasion of it was this: Mr. William Nicol of the High School, Edinburgh, during the autumn vacation being at Moffat, honest Allan (who was at that time on a visit to Dalswinton), and I went to pay Nicol a visit. We had such a joyous meeting that Mr. Masterton and I agreed, each in our own way, that we should celebrate the business."

O Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,	malt
And Rob and Allan cam to see;	
Three blyther hearts, that lee-lang night,	live-long
Ye wadna found in Christendie.	would not have
We are na fou, we're no that fou,	drunk
But just a drappie in our ee;	little drop eye
The cock may craw, the day may daw,	crow dawn
And ay we'll taste the barley bree.	always juice

[1] These lines were written on receiving the favour prayed for in the epistle of September, 1788, namely, that he might be appointed to the active duties of an exciseman in his own district. The last two lines were omitted by Currie, and were for the first time printed in connection with the poem in the Kilmarnock edition, edited by William Scott Douglas, 1876.

[2] "We have heard 'O Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,' sung after a presbytery dinner, the bass of the moderator giving something of a solemn character to the chorus . . . Wordsworth, who has told the world that he is a water drinker . . . regards this song with the complacency of a philosopher, knowing well that it is all a pleasant exaggeration; and that had the moon not lost patience and gone to bed, she would have seen 'Rob and Allan' on their way back to Ellisland, along the bold banks of the Nith [?], as steady as a brace of bishops."—PROFESSOR WILSON.——Lockhart has pronounced this "the best of all Burns' bacchanalian pieces." William Nicol, of the High School, Edinburgh, and Allan Masterton, another Edinburgh schoolmaster and a musical amateur, were both intimate friends of the poet, and the former in particular was often his companion. Masterton's

"It is the moon,—I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie."
—WILLIE BREW'D A PECK O' MAUT.

"It is the moon,—I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie."

Here are we met, three merry boys,
Three merry boys I trow are we;
And mony a night we've merry been,
And mony mae we hope to be! many more
We are na fou, &c.

It is the moon,—I ken her horn,
That's blinkin' in the lift sae hie; sky so high
She shines sae bright to wile us hame, cajole
But, by my sooth, she'll wait a wee! short while
We are na fou, &c.

Wha first shall rise to gang awa', go
A cuckold, coward loon is he!
Wha first beside his chair shall fa',[1]
He is the king amang us three!
We are na fou, &c.

SONG—I GAED A WAEFU' GATE YESTREEN.[2]

TUNE—"*The blue eyed lass.*"

I gaed a waefu' gate yestreen, went a woeful road last night
A gate, I fear, I'll dearly rue;
I gat my death frae twa sweet een, got from eyes
Twa lovely een o' bonnie blue.

daughter is celebrated in the song already given, "Beware o' bonnie Ann." Writing just ten years after this Currie remarks: "These three honest fellows—all men of uncommon talents—are now all *under the turf*." Currie states that the meeting was held at Laggan, a farm purchased by Nicol in Nithsdale, on the recommendation of Burns. This purchase was not, however, effected till the following year. "We are," says Robert Chambers, "furnished with a note of a 'disposition by William Riddell of Commieston, Writer to the Signet, to William Nicol, of the lands of Meikle and Little Laggan, lying in the barony of Snaid, parish of Glencairn, and shire of Dumfries, dated 26th March, 1790, and registered in the books of council and session 2d April, 1790.' . . . I have been informed that Nicol paid about £1500 for the Laggans." They consisted of about 284 acres, whereof 69 were arable, and 9 meadow ground; the remainder being good pasture-land with some wood. Of the exact place of meeting we know nothing further than what Burns tells us, namely, that it was at Moffat. Tradition asserts that day dawned long ere the guests arose to depart.——The song was published in the third volume of Johnson's *Museum*, in 1790.

[1] This is the reading of the line in the *Museum*. Several editors have altered "first" to "last," thinking that the former was merely a slip, and that as the "three" were met to have a long night of it, there would have been little sociality in trying who should get "fou" first. But the poet himself, writing to his friend Alexander Cunningham on March 22, 1794, quotes the verse as here given. He also quotes it in writing to Captain Riddell (October 16th, 1789), and though he there gives "last," he writes the word in italics to point it out as not the original reading.

[2] The date of this fine song may be stated to be December, 1789. The charming subject of it was the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Jaffray of Lochmaben. The poet had been invited to spend an evening at the manse, and was much pleased with the winning manners and laughing blue eyes of the young lady, then only fifteen. Next day he presented her with the song. Miss Jaffray became Mrs. Renwick, and went to New York, where she occupied a very respectable position, men like Washington Irving being proud of her acquaintanceship and delighted in her society. She died in 1850, and several years after a collection of her letters was published accompanied by a memoir.——The air to which the song was set in the *Museum* is the composition of Mr. Riddell of Glenriddell. It is so much beyond the compass of ordinary voices that it is surprising any one having even a slight knowledge of music did not see its inappropriateness. George Thomson set the song to the tune "The Blathrie o't;" in other collections it is wedded to the air of "My only Jo and dearie O."

'Twas not her golden ringlets bright,
Her lips like roses wat wi' dew, wet
Her heaving bosom, lily-white,—
It was her een sae bonnie blue.

She talk'd, she smil'd, my heart she wyl'd, beguiled
She charm'd my soul—I wist na how;
And aye the stound, the deadly wound, pang
Cam frae her een sae bonnie blue.

But spare to speak, and spare to speed;
She'll aiblins listen to my vow: perhaps
Should she refuse, I'll lay my dead death
To her twa een sae bonnie blue.

ON BEING APPOINTED TO THE EXCISE.

Searching auld wives' barrels,
Och—hon! the day!
That clarty barm should stain my laurels: filthy yeast
But—what'll ye say?
These movin' things ca'd wives and weans children
Wad move the very hearts o' stanes!

SONG—MY HARRY WAS A GALLANT GAY.[1]

TUNE—"*Highlander's Lament.*"

"The oldest title I ever heard of this air," says Burns, "was 'The Highland Watch's Farewell to Ireland.' The chorus I picked up from an old woman in Dunblane. The rest of the song is mine."

My Harry was a gallant gay,
Fu' stately strode he on the plain:
But now he's banish'd far away,
I'll never see him back again.
O for him back again!
O for him back again!
I wad gie a' Knockhaspie's land, would give
For Highland Harry back again.

[1] Peter Buchan (who, as we have remarked on a preceding page, is, however, but a doubtful authority) says that the hero of the original song was a Harry Lumsdale, the second son of a Highland gentleman, who made love to Miss Jeanie Gordon, daughter to the laird of Knockespock. He went abroad, and the lady was married to her cousin, a son of the laird of Rhynie. Tradition says, that some time after, her former lover accidentally met her, and while in the act of shaking her hand, her husband assailed him, and with his sword lopped off several of Highland Harry's fingers. Burns, who could hardly, we should think, have known anything of this story, evidently intended the song to be taken in a Jacobitical sense. Knockespock, we may add, is an estate in western Aberdeenshire.

When a' the lave gae to their bed, rest go
I wander dowie up the glen; sadly
I set me down and greet my fill, weep
And aye I wish him back again.
O for him back again, &c.

O were some villains hangit high,
And ilka body had their ain! everybody own
Then I might see the joyfu' sight,
My Highland Harry back again.
O for him back again, &c.

SONG—WHARE HAE YE BEEN.[1]

TUNE—"*Killiecrankie.*"

Whare hae ye been sae braw, lad? fine
Whare hae ye been sae brankie, O? smart
O, whare hae ye been sae braw, lad?
Cam ye by Killiecrankie, O?
An ye had been whare I hae been,
Ye wadna been sae cantie, O; would not have cheerful
An ye had seen what I hae seen,
I' the braes o' Killiecrankie, O.

I faught at land, I faught at sea; fought
At hame I faught my auntie, O;
But I met the devil and Dundee,
On the braes o' Killiecrankie, O.
An ye had been, &c.

The bauld Pitcur fell in a furr, bold furrow
An' Clavers got a clankie, O; ringing blow
Or I had fed an Athole gled, kite
On the braes o' Killiecrankie, O.
An ye had been, &c.

SONG—MY HEART'S IN THE HIGHLANDS.[2]

TUNE—"*Failte na Miosg*" *(The Musket Salute).*

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe;
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

[1] The chorus of this song is old, the rest is by Burns. Killiecrankie is a pass in the Highlands of Perthshire, where was fought the battle of 27th July, 1689, between the forces of King William III., under General Mackay, and the Highland clans under Viscount Dundee (Graham of Claverhouse), on the part of King James II. The Highlanders routed their opponents, but Dundee fell, and their victory was useless.

[2] "The first half stanza of this song," says Burns, "is old, the rest is mine." In an additional note to

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the north,
The birth-place of valour, the country of worth;
Wherever I wander, wherever I rove,
The hills of the Highlands for ever I love.

Farewell to the mountains high cover'd with snow;
Farewell to the straths and green valleys below:
Farewell to the forests and wild-hanging woods;
Farewell to the torrents and loud-pouring floods.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
Chasing the wild deer, and following the roe,
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

THE WHISTLE.

A BALLAD.

As the authentic *prose* history of the Whistle is curious, I shall here give it.—In the train of Anne of Denmark, when she came to Scotland with our James the Sixth, there came over also a Danish gentleman of gigantic stature and great prowess, and a matchless champion of Bacchus. He had a little ebony Whistle, which at the commencement of the orgies he laid on the table, and whoever was last able to blow it, every body else being disabled by the potency of the bottle, was to carry off the Whistle as a trophy of victory. The Dane produced credentials of his victories, without a single defeat, at the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, Moscow, Warsaw, and several of the petty courts in Germany; and challenged the Scots Bacchanalians to the alternative of trying his prowess, or else of acknowledging their inferiority.—After many overthrows on the part of the Scots, the Dane was encountered by Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwelton, ancestor of the present worthy baronet of that name; who, after three days' and three nights' hard contest, left the Scandinavian under the table,

And blew on the Whistle his requiem shrill.

Sir Walter, son to Sir Robert before mentioned, afterwards lost the Whistle to Walter Riddell of Glenriddell, who had married a sister of Sir Walter's.—On Friday, the 16th of October, 1790, at Friars' Carse, the Whistle was once more contended for, as related in the ballad, by the present Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwelton; Robert Riddell, Esq., of Glenriddell, lineal descendant and representative of Walter Riddell, who won the Whistle, and in whose family it had continued; and Alexander Ferguson, Esq. of Craigdarroch, likewise descended of the great Sir Robert; which last gentleman carried off the hard won honours of the field.—R. B.[1] "1790" is a mistake for 1789.

I sing of a Whistle, a Whistle of worth,
I sing of a Whistle, the pride of the North,
Was brought to the court of our good Scottish king,
And long with this Whistle all Scotland shall ring.

the *Museum* Mr. C. Kirkpatrick Sharpe introduces what he calls "the pretty words of the old song, which was a favourite of Sir Walter Scott." The old song is called "The strong walls of Derry," and in it a Highlander laments having left his country to fight in Ireland. We append the stanza which Burns adopted as the chorus of his song, along with the chorus of the original ditty.

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands, a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the deer, and following the doe;
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

CHORUS—
Let us drink and go hame, let us drink and go hame,
If we stay any longer, we'll get a bad name;
We'll get a bad name, and we'll fill ourselves fou,
And the strong walls of Derry it's ill to get through.

[1] A great deal of ink has been expended in connection with the "real presence" of Burns at this contest. From the evidence of the ballad itself it would seem as if the poet had been present as witness, judge, and chronicler. "He was not at the Carse," says Professor Wilson. "He *was* present," says Robert Chambers; and this had been asserted

Old Loda,[1] still rueing the arm of Fingal,
The god of the bottle sends down from his hall—
"This Whistle's your challenge, to Scotland get o'er,
And drink them to hell, Sir! or ne'er see me more!"

Old poets have sung, and old chronicles tell,
What champions ventur'd, what champions fell;
The son of great Loda was conqueror still,
And blew on the whistle their requiem shrill.

Till Robert, the lord of the Cairn and the Scaur,
Unmatch'd at the bottle, unconquer'd in war,
He drank his poor god-ship as deep as the sea,
No tide of the Baltic e'er drunker than he.

Thus Robert, victorious, the trophy has gain'd;
Which now in his house has for ages remain'd;
Till three noble chieftains, and all of his blood,
The jovial contest again have renew'd.

Three joyous good fellows with hearts clear of flaw;
Craigdarroch, so famous for wit, worth, and law;
And trusty Glenriddell, so skill'd in old coins;
And gallant Sir Robert, deep read in old wines.

Craigdarroch began, with a tongue smooth as oil,
Desiring Glenriddell to yield up the spoil;
Or else he would muster the heads of the clan,
And once more, in claret, try which was the man.

"By the gods of the ancients!" Glenriddell replies,
"Before I surrender so glorious a prize,
I'll conjure the ghost of the great Rorie More,[2]
And bumper his horn with him twenty times o'er."

previously by Allan Cunningham, who added the extravagant statement that "Burns drank bottle after bottle with the competitors, and seemed disposed to take up the conqueror." Dr. Hately Waddell is convinced of his presence, Mr. Scott Douglas takes the opposite view, and with him we are inclined to side. The strongest evidence in favour of Burns having witnessed the contest, apart from the poem itself, is a formal written statement signed by a William Hunter of Cockrune, in the parish of Closeburn, in 1841, affirming that in 1789 he was a servant in Friars' Carse, and that he had a perfect recollection of the whole affair. Burns was present in the dining-room, he said, and he (Hunter) supplied him with liquor. Yet we cannot help looking with great suspicion upon Hunter's story, told fifty years after the event. Hunter may have been a servant at the Carse when the contest occurred; and the celebrity of the poet, and the interest attached to every transaction with which he was in any way connected, especially as the competitors in this bacchanalian fray were of so much local importance, might very easily tempt a weak and garrulous old man to affirm something that never had occurred, if notice were thereby to be drawn to himself. Documents recovered by Cromek in 1807 establish that Mr. M'Murdo of Drumlanrig had agreed in writing, on October 10th, six days before the contest, to be judge, and George Johnston, and Patrick Miller, younger of Dalswinton, to be witnesses. Now one or more of these would surely be present, and it is highly suspicious that Hunter ignores this and mentions Burns only. That Burns did not expect to be there is conclusively proved by a letter from him to Mr. Riddell written on the day of the contest. Therefore the picture suggested by the ballad—

Next up rose our bard, like a prophet in drink—

we believe to be merely a matter of dramatic propriety and poetic license.

[1] See Ossian's *Carric-thura.*—R. B.

[2] See Johnson's *Tour to the Hebrides.*—R. B.

Sir Robert, a soldier, no speech would pretend,
But he ne'er turn'd his back on his foe—or his friend,
Said, "Toss down the Whistle, the prize of the field,"
And knee-deep in claret, he'd die or he'd yield.

To the board of Glenriddell our heroes repair,
So noted for drowning of sorrow and care;
But for wine and for welcome not more known to fame,
Than the sense, wit, and taste, of a sweet, lovely dame.

A bard was selected to witness the fray,
And tell future ages the feats of the day;
A bard who detested all sadness and spleen,
And wish'd that Parnassus a vineyard had been.

The dinner being over, the claret they ply,
And ev'ry new cork was a new spring of joy;
In the bands of old friendship and kindred so set,
And the bands grew the tighter the more they were wet.

Gay Pleasure ran riot as bumpers ran o'er;
Bright Phœbus ne'er witnessed so joyous a corps,
And vow'd that to leave them he was quite forlorn,
Till Cynthia hinted he'd see them next morn.

Six bottles a-piece had well wore out the night,
When gallant Sir Robert to finish the fight,
Turn'd o'er in one bumper a bottle of red,
And swore 'twas the way that their ancestor did.

Then worthy Glenriddell, so cautious and sage,
No longer the warfare ungodly would wage,
A high ruling elder[1] to wallow in wine!
He left the foul business to folks less divine.

The gallant Sir Robert fought hard to the end;
But who can with fate and quart bumpers contend?
Though Fate said a hero should perish in light;
So up rose bright Phœbus—and down fell the knight.

Next up rose our bard, like a prophet in drink:—
"Craigdarroch, thou'lt soar when creation shall sink!
But if thou would flourish immortal in rhyme,
Come—one bottle more—and have at the sublime!

"Thy line, that have struggled for freedom with Bruce,
Shall heroes and patriots ever produce:
So thine be the laurel, and mine be the bay;
The field thou hast won, by yon bright god of day!"

[1] The senior elder, being a layman, in the kirk-session of a Presbyterian church.

TO DR. BLACKLOCK.[1]

ELLISLAND, 21st Oct. 1789.

Wow, but your letter made me vauntie! I vow elated
And are ye hale, and weel, and cantie? cheerful
I kenn'd it still your wee bit jauntie knew little jaunt
Wad bring ye to: would
Lord send you aye as weel's I want ye,
And then ye'll do.

The ill-thief blaw the Heron[2] south! devil
And never drink be near his drouth!
He tauld mysel' by word o' mouth, told
He'd tak my letter;
I lippen'd to the chiel in trouth, trusted fellow truth
And bade nae better. desired

[1] Dr. Thomas Blacklock, to whom this epistle is addressed, was an amiable blind poet, upon whom even the *Ursa Major* of literature, Dr. Johnson, looked with reverence, and whose memory will be ever dear to the admirers of Burns, for having been the immediate cause of his abandoning his intention of going to the West Indies. He was born at Annan, November 10, 1721, of poor parents who came from the north of England. He lost his eyesight through smallpox when six months old. Having been enabled, through the kindness of Dr. Stevenson of Edinburgh, to enter himself a student in the university, he was licensed as a preacher in 1759, and afterwards, through the influence of the Earl of Selkirk, presented to the parish of Kirkcudbright; but the people having refused to receive him he retired, after two years' contention, upon a moderate annuity. The remainder of his life was spent in literary pursuits, and in habits of intimacy with literary men. Dr. Blacklock died in Edinburgh, July 7, 1791. Heron has sketched his character with great feeling:—"There was never perhaps one among all mankind whom you might more truly have called *an angel upon earth* than Dr. Blacklock. He was guileless and innocent as a child, yet endowed with manly sagacity and penetration. His heart was a perpetual spring of benignity. . . . Poetry was to him the dear solace of perpetual blindness." Towards Burns his conduct was highly friendly and generous. The origin of Burns's connection with Dr. Blacklock is stated in the biographical sketch at the beginning of this work, to which the reader may refer. The poetic letter to which the above was an answer, ran as follows:—

EDINBURGH, 24th August, 1789.

Dear Burns, thou brother of my heart,
Both for thy virtues and thy art;
If art it may be called in thee,
Which nature's bounty, large and free
With pleasure in thy breast diffuses,
And warms thy soul with all the Muses.
Whether to laugh with easy grace,
Thy numbers move the sage's face,
Or bid the softer passions rise,
And ruthless souls with grief surprise,
'Tis nature's voice distinctly felt,
Through thee her organ, thus to melt.

Most anxiously I wish to know,
With thee of late how matters go;
How keeps thy much-loved Jean her health?
What promises thy farm of wealth?
Whether the muse persists to smile,
And all thy anxious cares beguile?
Whether bright fancy keeps alive?
And how thy darling infants thrive?

For me, with grief and sickness spent,
Since I my journey homeward bent,
Spirits depress'd no more I mourn,
But vigour, life, and health return.
No more to gloomy thoughts a prey,
I sleep all night, and live all day;
By turns my book and friend enjoy,
And thus my circling hours employ!
Happy while yet these hours remain,
If Burns could join the cheerful train,
With wonted zeal, sincere and fervent,
Salute once more his humble servant,

THOMAS BLACKLOCK.

[2] Robert Heron, the messenger above alluded to, was born at New Galloway, November 6, 1764. He was the son of a poor weaver, who, from the remarkable love of learning and assiduity in pursuit of knowledge displayed by his son, designed him for the church. He early devoted himself to literary pursuits, and wrote on all subjects—history, biography, science, criticism—with great talent and power. He was unfortunately distinguished by habits of extravagance, and was frequently at the mercy of his creditors. He went to London in 1799, and for some time derived a good income from his pen, but his evil habits beset him; he was thrown into Newgate, where he remained many months in the greatest distress. Being seized with a lingering illness, he was removed to an hospital, where he died, April 13, 1807. Heron was the author of a *Life of Burns*, containing a very eloquent estimate of his genius; but in it perhaps the darker shades of the poet's character are made too prominent.

But aiblins honest Master Heron — perhaps
Had at the time some dainty fair one,
To ware his theologic care on, — expend
And holy study;
And tir'd o' sauls to waste his lear on, — learning
E'en tried the body.

But what d'ye think, my trusty fier, — friend
I'm turn'd a gauger—Peace be here!
Parnassian queans, I fear, I fear
Ye'll now disdain me,
And then my fifty pounds a year
Will little gain me.

Ye glaikit, gleesome, dainty damies, — giddy-pated dames
Wha by Castalia's wimplin' streamies,
Lowp, sing, and lave your pretty limbies, — leap
Ye ken, ye ken,
That strang necessity supreme is
'Mang sons o' men.

I hae a wife and twa wee laddies,
They maun hae brose and brats o' duddies; — must rags of clothing
Ye ken yoursels my heart right proud is,
I need na vaunt,
But I'll sned besoms—thraw saugh woodies, — cut twist willow ropes
Before they want.

Lord help me thro' this warld o' care!
I'm weary sick o't late and air! — early
Not but I hae a richer share
Than mony ithers; — many others
But why should ae man better fare, — one
And a' men brithers?

Come, Firm Resolve, take thou the van,
Thou stalk o' carl-hemp in man! — male-hemp
And let us mind, faint heart ne'er wan — remember won
A lady fair;
Wha does the utmost that he can,
Will whyles do mair. — sometimes

But to conclude my silly rhyme,
(I'm scant o' verse, and scant o' time,)
To make a happy fire-side clime
To weans and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life!

My compliments to sister Beckie;
And eke the same to honest Lucky,

I wat she is a dainty chuckie, wot jolly matron
As e'er tread clay!
And gratefully, my guid auld cockie,
I'm yours for aye.
ROBERT BURNS.

SONG—TO MARY IN HEAVEN.[1]

TUNE—"*Death of Captain Cook.*"

Burns sent this song to his friend Mr. Graham of Fintry, in a letter dated 9th December, 1789. He says: "The song beginning 'Thou lingering star,' &c., is the last, and in my own opinion, by much the best of the inclosed compositions ['Grose's Peregrinations,' 'Kirk's Alarm,' 'Five Carlins,' and this.] I beg leave to present it with my most respectful compliments to Mrs. Graham."

Thou ling'ring star, with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary! dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallowed grove,
Where by the winding Ayr we met,
To live one day of parting love!
Eternity will not efface
Those records dear of transports past;
Thy image at our last embrace;
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

1 "At Ellisland," says Professor Wilson, "Burns wrote many of his finest strains—and above all, that immortal burst of passion, 'To Mary in Heaven.'" Certain particulars connected with the composition of this poem, as said to be narrated by Mrs. Burns, are given in Lockhart's *Life*. The date there given is September, 1789, but Robert Chambers, after an exhaustive investigation of all the circumstances, scarcely doubts but "that the composition of 'To Mary in Heaven' took place on Tuesday the 20th October, and that this was consequently the date of the death of the heroine." The poet, it will be noticed, represents himself in the opening lines as addressing the morning-star. Mrs. Burns in her account of the origin of the poem stated that, while in the throes of composition, he had his eyes fixed on a star of evening, a planet that "shone like another moon." This poem has received very high praise from most critics. "Cuthbert Bede" (Rev. Ed. Bradley), however, thinks it inferior in purity of sentiment to "Highland Mary," and that it displays far too much of "sensuous warmth." The criticism in "The Centenary Edition" of Burns's poetry is similar; it is described as "specifically amatorious, yet wofully lacking in genuine inspiration." Surely there are grounds for these opinions; and in particular "The flowers sprang wanton to be prest" is to us a very distasteful line. We cannot help wondering to what extent Burns's real feelings are here displayed. If he was still so filled with love and regret for Mary, what room was there in his bosom for his own Jean? It is elsewhere shown that he seemed very quickly to forget Mary after their parting. We must remember that we have here to do with Burns the literary artist as well as Burns the man. He himself, in the letter quoted above, has no hesitation in judging critically of the poetical merits of this piece as against those of the other pieces sent along with it to Mr. Graham.——The air to which the song is set in the *Museum* is quite a trivial production.

Ayr, gurgling, kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods, thick'ning, green;
The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
Twin'd amorous round the raptur'd scene;
The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray,—
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care!
Time but the impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
My Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

THE FIVE CARLINS.[1]

AN ELECTION BALLAD.

TUNE—"*Chevy Chase.*"

There was[2] five Carlins in the south, sturdy old women
They fell upon a scheme,
To send a lad to Lon'on town
To bring them tidings hame. home

Nor only bring them tidings hame,
But do their errands there,
And aiblins gowd and honour baith perhaps gold both
Might be that laddie's share.

There was Maggie by the banks o' Nith,[3]
A dame wi' pride eneugh;

[1] The contest celebrated in this ballad was one between Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall, and Captain Patrick Miller, younger of Dalswinton, the canvass for which began towards the end of 1789, for the united burghs of Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, Annan, Lochmaben, and Sanquhar. Burns sent the ballad to his friend, Mr. Graham of Fintry in a letter dated 9th December, 1789, in which some account of the state of election matters is given (see the letter). Captain Miller, son of the poet's landlord, united the interest of the Duke of Queensberry and the Whigs; and Sir James that of the court and the Tories. Burns affects neutrality in this ballad, though his sympathies are evidently with Sir James Johnstone and the Tories. But his detestation of the Duke of Queensberry modified very greatly his sentiments towards his Whig landlord, and his other friends of that party. The personifications of the burghs have been spoken of in terms of high praise by those acquainted with the localities. There are several different versions of the ballad; but the variations are unimportant. "Whisky Jean that took her gill," is in one version, for instance, dignified by the title of "Brandy Jean." It may be added that Captain Miller carried the election, but after a severe contest, and at a very heavy expense. It was not decided till July, 1790.

[2] *Was* is Burns's word, and according to Scottish usage not ungrammatical, but of the best ballad use, and employed by him deliberately as being so.

[3] This refers to Dumfries, the most important town in this part of Scotland, and much the largest of the five burghs.

"Now wham to choose and wham refuse,
At strife thir Carlins fell."

—THE FIVE CARLINS.

"Now wham to choose and wham refuse,
At strife thir Carlins fell."

And Marjorie o' the monie Lochs,[1] many
A Carlin auld an' teugh.

And blinkin' Bess o' Annandale,[2]
That dwells near Solway side,
And whisky Jean that took her gill,[3]
In Galloway so wide.

And black Joàn frae Crichton peel,[4] from tower
O' gipsy kith an' kin,
Five wighter Carlins were na found sturdier
The south countrie within.

To send a lad to Lon'on town
They met upon a day,
And monie a Knight and monie a Laird,
This errand fain would gae. go

O! monie a Knight and monie a Laird,
This errand fain would gae;
But nae ane could their fancy please,
O! ne'er a ane but twae. two

The first ane was a belted Knight,
Bred o' a border band,
An' he wad gae to Lon'on town, would go
Might nae man him withstand.

And he wad do their errands weel, would
And meikle he wad say,
And ilka ane at Lon'on court every one
Wad bid to him guid day.

Then neist came in a sodger youth, next
And spak wi' modest grace,
An' he wad gae to Lon'on town,
If sae their pleasure was.

He wad na hecht them courtly gifts, promise
Nor meikle speech pretend;
But he wad hecht an honest heart
Wad ne'er desert his friend.

[1] Lochmaben, an ancient burgh of Dumfriesshire, formerly the residence of King Robert the Bruce, from whom it received many privileges. It is surrounded by nine small lochs.

[2] Annan, a thriving town of Dumfriesshire, the chief seat of the Bruce family after their accession to the throne.

[3] Kirkcudbright, the chief town of the stewartry (or county) of the same name, beautifully situated near where the Dee enters the Solway.

[4] Sanquhar, a small burgh in the upper part of Nithsdale, on the road from Ayr to Dumfries. It was frequently visited by the poet. One of his visits gave occasion to the "Ode" to the memory of Mrs. Oswald of Auchincruive. Near it stands the ruined castle or *peel* of Sanquhar, a massive building, at one time the abode of the family of Crichton, now a picturesque ruin. The Admirable Crichton sprung from a branch of this family, and was born in the adjacent castle of Elliock.

Now wham to choose and wham refuse,
At strife thir Carlins fell; — these
For some had gentle folks to please,
And some wad please themsel.

Then out spak mim-mou'd Meg o' Nith, — prim-mouthed
An' she spak up wi' pride,
An' she wad send the sodger youth
Whatever might betide.

For the auld guidman o' Lon'on court[1]
She did not care a pin,
But she wad send the sodger youth
To greet his eldest son.[2]

Then up sprang Bess o' Annandale:
And a deadly aith she's ta'en, — oath
That she wad vote the border Knight,
Tho' she wad vote her lane. — alone

"For far-aff fowls hae feathers fair,
An fools o' change are fain:
But I hae tried the border Knight,
I'll try him yet again."

Says black Joàn frae Crichton peel,
A Carlin stoor and grim, — austere
"The auld guidman or the young guidman
For me may sink or swim.

"For fools will prate o' right and wrang,
While knaves laugh them to scorn;
But the Sodger's friends hae blawn the best,
Sae he shall bear the horn."

Then whisky Jean spak o'er her drink,
"Ye weel ken kimmers a', — gossips
The auld guidman o' Lon'on court,
His back's been at the wa'.

"And monie a friend that kiss'd his caup — bowl
Is now a fremit wight; — estranged
But it's ne'er be sae wi' whisky Jean,—
We'll send the border Knight."

Then slow raise Marjorie o' the Lochs, — rose
And wrinkled was her brow:
Her ancient weed was russet gray,
Her auld Scots bluid was true.

[1] George III. [2] The Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV.

"There's some great folks set light by me,
I set as light by them;
But I will send to Lon'on town
Wham I like best at hame."

Sae how this weighty plea will end,
Nae mortal wight can tell:
God grant the King and ilka man — every
May look weel to himsel'.

ELECTION BALLAD FOR WESTERHA'.[1]

The Laddies by the banks o' Nith
Wad trust his Grace, wi' a', Jamie; — would
But he'll sair them as he sair'd the king, — serve
Turn tail and rin awa', Jamie. — run
Up and waur them a', Jamie, — worst
Up and waur them a';
The Johnstones hae the guidin' o't,
Up and waur them a'.

The day he stood his country's friend
Or gied her faes a claw, Jamie, — foes stroke
Or frae puir man a blessin' wan, — from won
That day his Grace ne'er saw, Jamie.
Up and waur them a', &c.

But wha is he, his country's boast?
Like him there is na twa, Jamie; — not two
There's no a callant tents the kye, — lad herds cows
But kens o' Westerha', Jamie. — knows
Up and waur them a', &c.

To end the wark, here's Whistlebirk,[2] — work
Lang may his whistle blaw, Jamie;
And Maxwell[3] true, o' sterling blue,
And we'll be Johnstone's a', Jamie.
Up and waur them a', &c.

[1] See note to preceding piece. In this ballad Burns throws aside his neutrality, casting in his lot fairly with the Tory candidate Sir James Johnstone, whose character is favourably contrasted with that of his Grace of Queensberry. In the first verse the poet alludes to the duke's conduct in regard to the late Regency Bill (see note to "Ode to the Departed Regency Bill"), when he took the side of Fox in favour of the surrender of the power of the crown into the hands of the Prince of Wales, as constitutionally entitled to be made regent.

[2] A Mr. Birtwhistle, merchant in and provost of Kirkcudbright.

[3] Provost Maxwell of Lochmaben, a friend of the poet, and referred to in a note half-a-dozen pages farther on.

PROLOGUE,

SPOKEN AT THE THEATRE, DUMFRIES, ON NEW-YEAR'S DAY EVENING. [1790.]

In a letter to his brother Gilbert, 11th January, 1790, Burns says: "We have gotten a set of very decent players here just now. I have seen them an evening or two. David Campbell, in Ayr, wrote to me by the manager of the company, a Mr. Sutherland, who is a man of apparent worth. On New-Year's Day evening I gave him the following prologue, which he spouted to his audience with applause."

No song nor dance I bring from yon great city
That queens it o'er our taste—the more's the pity:
Tho', by-the-by, abroad why will ye roam?
Good sense and taste are natives here at home:
But not for panegyric I appear,
I come to wish you all a good New Year!
Old Father Time deputes me here before ye,
Not for to preach, but tell his simple story:
The sage, grave Ancient cough'd, and bade me say,
"You're one year older this important day,"
If *wiser too*—he hinted some suggestion,
But 'twould be rude, you know, to ask the question;
And with a would-be-roguish leer and wink,
He bade me on you press this one word—"Think!"[1]

Ye sprightly youths, quite flush with hope and spirit,
Who think to storm the world by dint of merit,
To you the dotard has a deal to say,
In his sly, dry, sententious, proverb way!
He bids you mind, amid your thoughtless rattle,
That the first blow is ever half the battle;
That tho' some by the skirt may try to snatch him;
Yet by the forelock is the hold to catch him;
That whether doing, suffering, or forbearing,
You may do miracles by persevering.

Last, tho' not least in love, ye youthful fair,
Angelic forms, high Heaven's peculiar care!
To you old Bald-pate smoothes his wrinkled brow,
And humbly begs you'll mind the important—Now!
To crown your happiness he asks your leave,
And offers, bliss to give and to receive.

For our sincere, tho' haply weak endeavours,
With grateful pride we own your many favours;
And howsoe'er our tongues may ill reveal it,
Believe our glowing bosoms truly feel it.

[1] MS. variation: Said—Sutherland, in one word, bid them—THINK.

SKETCH—NEW YEAR'S DAY. [1790.]

TO MRS. DUNLOP

This day, Time winds th' exhausted chain,
To run the twelvemonth's length again:
I see the old, bald-pated fellow,
With ardent eyes, complexion sallow,
Adjust the unimpair'd machine,
To wheel the equal, dull routine.

The absent lover, minor heir,
In vain assail him with their prayer;
Deaf as my friend, he sees them press,
Nor makes the hour one moment less.
Will you (the Major's[1] with the hounds,
The happy tenants share his rounds;
Coila's fair Rachel's[2] care to-day,
And blooming Keith's[3] engaged with Gray)
From housewife cares a minute borrow—
—That grandchild's cap will do to-morrow—
And join with me a-moralizing?
This day's propitious to be wise in.

First, what did yesternight deliver?
"Another year is gone for ever."
And what is this day's strong suggestion?
"The passing moment's all we rest on!"
Rest on—for what? what do we here?
Or why regard the passing year?
Will Time, amus'd with proverb'd lore,
Add to our date one minute more?
A few days may—a few years must—
Repose us in the silent dust.
Then is it wise to damp our bliss?
Yes—all such reasonings are amiss!
The voice of Nature loudly cries,
And many a message from the skies,
That something in us never dies:
That on this frail uncertain state
Hang matters of eternal weight;
That future life in worlds unknown
Must take its hue from this alone;
Whether as heavenly glory bright,
Or dark as Misery's woful night.—

[1] Fifth son of Mrs. Dunlop. He was distinguished as a military officer, and served as major-general in the Peninsular war. He died in 1832.

[2] Rachel, daughter of Mrs. Dunlop, afterwards married to Robert Glasgow, Esq. She had considerable skill in drawing, and was employing her pencil at the time in making a sketch of Coila in the "Vision."

[3] Keith, Mrs. Dunlop s youngest daughter, similarly occupied with a subject from Gray's "Elegy."

Since then, my honour'd, first of friends,
On this poor being all depends;
Let us th' important *now* employ,
And live as those that never die.
Tho' you, with days and honours crown'd,
Witness that filial circle round,
(A sight life's sorrows to repulse,
A sight pale envy to convulse),
Others now claim your chief regard;
Yourself, you wait your bright reward.

SCOTS PROLOGUE,[1]

FOR MRS. SUTHERLAND'S BENEFIT NIGHT, DUMFRIES.

Two pages back we give a prologue written for Mr. Sutherland of the Dumfries theatre. The following was written soon after for Mrs. Sutherland's benefit. In a letter sent by Burns to Provost Staig, Dumfries, are these passages: "My friend and fellow-labourer in scaling the barren heights of Parnassus, Mr. Sutherland, having asked me for a Prologue, or something like it, for Mrs. Sutherland's benefit night, I have composed a Prologue, or 'something like it' for him, as you will see by the enclosed. . . . There is a dark stroke of politics in the belly of the piece, and like a faithful, loyal subject I lay it before you as the Chief Magistrate . . . that, if the said poem be found to contain any treason . . . against our sovereign lord the King, or any of his liege subjects, the said Prologue may not see the light."

What needs this din about the town o' Lon'on,
How this new play an' that new sang is comin'?
Why is outlandish stuff sae meikle courted? much
Does nonsense mend like brandy, when imported?
Is there nae poet, burning keen for fame,
Will try to gie us sangs and plays at hame?
For comedy abroad he need na toil,
A fool and knave are plants of every soil;
Nor need he hunt as far as Rome and Greece
To gather matter for a serious piece;
There's themes enough in Caledonian story,
Would show the tragic muse in a' her glory.

Is there no daring bard will rise, and tell
How glorious Wallace stood, how, hapless, fell?
Where are the muses fled that could produce
A drama worthy o' the name o' Bruce;

[1] Some of the expressions in this "Prologue" suggest that Burns at this time cherished the idea of setting about the dramatizing of some subject connected with Scottish life or history. In a letter written from Ellisland in the preceding December to the Countess of Glencairn this passage occurs:—"I have turned my thoughts on the drama. I do not mean the stately buskin of the Tragic Muse. Does not your ladyship think that an Edinburgh theatre would be more amused with affectation, folly, and whim of true Scottish growth, than manners, which by far the greatest part of the audience can only know at second-hand?" And a little after this time [2d March, 1790] he wrote to Mr. Peter Hill, Bookseller, asking him to pick up for him "second-handed or cheap copies of Otway's dramatic works, Ben Jonson's, Dryden's, Congreve's, Wycherley's, Vanbrugh's, Cibber's, or any dramatic works of the more modern Macklin, Garrick, Foote, Colman, or Sheridan. A good copy, too, of Molière in French I much want."

How here, even here, he first unsheathed the sword
'Gainst mighty England and her guilty lord:
And after mony a bloody, deathless doing,
Wrench'd his dear country from the jaws of ruin?
O for a Shakespeare or an Otway scene,
To draw the lovely, hapless Scottish Queen!
Vain all th' omnipotence of female charms
'Gainst headlong, ruthless, mad rebellion's arms.
She fell, but fell with spirit truly Roman,
To glut the vengeance of a rival woman:
A woman, tho' the phrase may seem uncivil,
As able and as cruel as the devil!
One Douglas lives in Home's immortal page,
But Douglases were heroes every age:
And tho' your fathers, prodigal of life,
A Douglas followed to the martial strife,
Perhaps, if bowls row right, and Right succeeds, roll
Ye yet may follow where a Douglas leads!

As ye hae generous done, if a' the land
Would take the Muses' servants by the hand;
Not only hear, but patronise, befriend them,
And where ye justly can commend, commend them;
And aiblins when they winna stand the test, perhaps will not
Wink hard and say, "the folks hae done their best."
Would a' the land do this, then I'll be caution
Ye'll soon hae poets o' the Scottish nation,
Will gar fame blaw until her trumpet crack, make
And warsle Time an' lay him on his back! wrestle with

For us and for our stage should ony spier, inquire
"Whase aught thae chiels maks a' this bustle here?" who owns those
My best leg foremost, I'll set up my brow, [fellows (who) make
We have the honour to belong to you!
We're your ain bairns, e'en guide us as ye like, own children
But like good mithers, shore before you strike,— threaten
And gratefu' still I hope ye'll ever find us,
For a' the patronage and meikle kindness
We've got frae a' professions, sets, and ranks:
God help us! we're but poor—ye'se get but thanks. you shall

TO JOHN TAYLOR.

With Pegasus upon a day,
Apollo weary flying,
Through frosty hills the journey lay,
On foot the way was plying.

Poor slip-shod giddy Pegasus
Was but a sorry walker;
To Vulcan then Apollo goes,
To get a frosty caulker.

Obliging Vulcan fell to work,
Threw by his coat and bonnet,
And did Sol's business in a crack;
Sol paid him with a sonnet.

Ye Vulcan's sons of Wanlockhead,
Pity my sad disaster;
My Pegasus is poorly shod—
I'll pay you like my master.[1]

ROBERT BURNS.

RAMAGE'S, 3 *o'clock (no date).*

LINES

TO A GENTLEMAN WHO HAD SENT A NEWSPAPER, AND OFFERED TO CONTINUE IT FREE OF EXPENSE.[2]

Kind Sir, I've read your paper through,
And, faith, to me, 'twas really new!
How guessed ye, Sir, what maist I wanted? — most
This mony a day I've grain'd and gaunted, — groaned yawned
To ken what French mischief was brewin';
Or what the drumlie Dutch were doin'; — muddy
That vile doup-skelper, Emperor Joseph, — breech-slapper
If Venus yet had got his nose off;
Or how the collieshangie works — contention
Atween the Russians and the Turks;
Or if the Swede, before he halt,
Would play anither Charles the Twalt:
If Denmark, any body spak o't;
Or Poland, wha had now the tack o't; — lease

[1] In the above terms did Burns request, according to Cunningham, Mr. Taylor's intercession with the blacksmith of Wanlockhead, to have his horse's shoes *frosted*, when, on one occasion, being on an excise journey, probably in the winter of 1789-90, Vulcan was too busy with other matters to attend immediately to the poet's wants. The verses were addressed to Taylor, because he was said to have complete influence over the smith, and the result was that the smith at once proceeded to work. It is said that for thirty years afterwards *Burnewin* used to boast that "he had never been weel paid but ance, and that was by a poet, who paid him in money, paid him in drink, and paid him in verse."

[2] The gentleman here addressed was probably Mr. Peter Stuart of the *Star* newspaper, London. To this paper Burns had sent various contributions in prose and verse. In July, 1838, Mr. Daniel Stuart wrote to the *Gentleman's Magazine* that his brother had, at the date of these "Lines," offered Burns a yearly salary, quite as large as his excise endowments, for occasional contributions; but the poet apparently did not see his way to accept this offer. The story is problematical. The newspaper not coming regularly the subjoined note of remonstrance was sent to headquarters:—

Dear Peter, dear Peter,
We poor sons of metre
Are often negleckit, ye ken;
For instance, your sheet, man,
(Tho' glad I'm to see't, man),
I get it no ae day in ten.—R. B.

How cut-throat Prussian blades were hingin', hanging
How libbet Italy was singin';
If Spaniard, Portuguese, or Swiss,
Were sayin' or takin' aught amiss:
Or how our merry lads at hame,
In Britain's court kept up the game:
How royal George, the Lord leuk o'er him! look
Was managing St. Stephen's quorum;
If sleekit Chatham Will was livin', sly
Or glaikit Charlie got his nieve in; thoughtless fist
How daddie Burke the plea was cookin',
If Warren Hastings' neck was yeukin'; itching
How cesses, stents, and fees were rax'd, assessments duties
Or if bare a—s yet were tax'd; [stretched out
The news o' princes, dukes, and earls,
Pimps, sharpers, bawds, and opera-girls;
If that daft buckie, Geordie Wales,[1] mad fellow
Was threshin' still at hizzies' tails, wenches'
Or if he was grown oughtlins douser, at all sedater
And no a perfect kintra cooser: country stallion
A' this and mair I never heard of,
And but for you I might despaired of.
So gratefu', back your news I send you,
And pray a' guid things may attend you.

ELLISLAND, *Monday Morning*, 1790.

SONG—YESTREEN I HAD A PINT O' WINE.[2]

TUNE—"*Banks of Banna.*

Yestreen I had a pint o' wine, yester evening
A place where body saw na; nobody saw
Yestreen lay on this breast o' mine
The gowden locks of Anna. golden

[1] George IV., then Prince of Wales.

[2] The "Anna" here celebrated was Anne Park, servant in the Globe Tavern, Dumfries, and niece (or sister) of its landlady, Mrs. Hyslop. This Hebe, according to Cunningham, "was accounted beautiful by the customers at the inn when wine made them tolerant in matters of taste." Dr. Hately Waddell remarks of her: "Said to have been a person of very ordinary attractions, with coarse red hair." Much of Burns's time was spent in this tavern, one evil result of which was that Anne Park gave birth on the 31st March, 1791, to a child of whom the poet was the father, and who was named Elizabeth Burns. This child was for a short time taken care of by the bard's mother and sisters at Mossgiel; but the poet's wife herself sent for it and became its tender nurse and guardian, though encumbered by an infant (William Nicol Burns) ten days younger than the other. The girl was brought up with unvarying kindness, and never left Mrs. Burns's roof till her marriage to John Thomson, a soldier, and afterwards a weaver in Pollokshaws, near Glasgow, by whom she had a numerous family. She died at Crossmyloof, near Glasgow, in June, 1873, aged eighty-two years.

Burns sent the above song to Thomson in 1793 for publication, with the remark that he thought it "one of the best love songs I ever composed in my life." Thomson, however, did not approve of the song even after some of its warm touches had been toned down. Burns copied it into the Glenriddell Collection, and also sent a copy of it to his convivial friends of the Crochallan Fencibles in Edinburgh, with the Postscript appended. The writing of such a voluptuous lyric connected with such a scandalous episode in his career shows the poet's character in its darkest light.

The hungry Jew in wilderness
  Rejoicing ower his manna,
Was naething to my hinny bliss honey
  Upon the lips of Anna.

Ye monarchs, tak the east and west,
  Frae Indus to Savannah!
Gie me within my straining grasp
  The melting form of Anna!
There I'll despise imperial charms,
  An Empress or Sultana,
While dying raptures, in her arms,
  I give and take with Anna!

Awa, thou flaunting god o' day!
  Awa, thou pale Diana!
Ilk star gae hide thy twinkling ray, every
  When I'm to meet my Anna!
Come, in thy raven plumage, night!
  Sun, moon, and stars withdrawn a';
And bring an angel pen to write
  My transports wi' my Anna!

POSTSCRIPT.

The kirk and state may join and tell
  To do such things I maunna: must not
The kirk and state may gae to ——
  And I'll gae to my Anna.
She is the sunshine o' my ee, eye
  To live but her I canna; without
Had I on earth but wishes three,
  The first should be my Anna.

ELEGY ON PEG NICHOLSON.

Peg Nicholson derived her name from the insane virago who attempted to assassinate George III., August 2, 1786. She belonged to his friend Nicol, and the circumstances attending her death are set forth in a letter to him, dated 9th February, 1790, and inclosing the "Elegy." He says:—"I would freely have given her price to have saved her; she has vexed me beyond description. Indebted as I was to your goodness beyond what I can ever repay, I eagerly grasped at your offer to have the mare with me. That I might at least show my readiness in wishing to be grateful, I took every care of her in my power. . . . While she was with me, she was under my own eye, and I assure you, my much valued friend, everything was done for her that could be done; and the accident has vexed me to the heart. In fact I could not pluck up spirits to write to you, on account of this unfortunate business."

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
  As ever trod on airn; iron
But now she's floating down the Nith,
  And past the mouth o' Cairn.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And rode through thick and thin;
But now she's floating down the Nith,
And wanting even the skin.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And ance she bore a priest;[1] once
But now she's floating down the Nith,
For Solway fish a feast.

Peg Nicholson was a good bay mare,
And the priest he rode her sair; sore
And much oppress'd and bruis'd she was,
As priest-rid cattle are, &c. &c.

SONG—GUIDWIFE, COUNT THE LAWIN.[2]

TUNE—"*Guidwife, count the Lawin.*

Gane is the day, and mirk's the night, gone dark
But we'll ne'er stray for fau't o' light, want
For ale and brandy's stars and moon,
And bluid-red wine's the risin' sun.
Then, guidwife, count the lawin, reckoning
The lawin, the lawin,
Then, guidwife, count the lawin,
And bring a coggie mair. beaker more

There's wealth and ease for gentlemen,
And simple folk maun fecht and fen'; must fight shift
But here we're a' in ae accord, one
For ilka man that's drunk's a lord. each
Then, guidwife, &c.

My coggie is a haly pool, holy
That heals the wounds o' care and dool; sorrow
And pleasure is a wanton trout,
An' ye drink it a' ye'll find him out.[3]
Then, guidwife, &c.

[1] A reference to Nicol himself, who, though educated with a view to the ministry, and licensed to preach, had no love for the sacred calling, and turned aside, like so many of his countrymen similarly qualified, to "teach the young idea how to shoot."

[2] "This song," says Stenhouse, "was written by Burns, with the exception of the chorus, which is old. In a MS. recovered by Cromek and printed in the *Reliques*, the poet says:—'The chorus of this is part of an old song, one stanza of which I recollect.'

Every day my wife tells me,
That ale and brandy will ruin me;
But if guid liquor be my dead,
This shall be written on my head—
Chorus—Then, guidwife, count the lawin, &c.

The tune to which the verses are adapted was furnished by Burns."

[3] This stanza so pleased the poet, that he scratched it with his diamond on a window pane of the Globe Inn, Dumfries.

BALLAD,

ON THE CLOSE OF THE ELECTION CONTEST FOR THE DUMFRIES BURGHS, JULY, 1790.[1]

ADDRESSED TO R. GRAHAM, ESQ., OF FINTRY.

Fintry, my stay in worldly strife,
Friend o' my muse, friend o' my life,
Are ye as idle's I am?
Come then, wi' uncouth, kintra fleg, country sprawl
O'er Pegasus I'll fling my leg,
And ye shall see me try him.

I'll sing the zeal Drumlanrig[2] bears.
Wha left the all-important cares
Of princes and their darlin's;[3]
And, bent on winning[4] burgh touns, towns
Cam shaking hands wi' wabster loons, weaver fellows
And kissing barefit carlins.[5] barefooted hags

Combustion thro' our boroughs rode,
Whistling his roaring pack abroad,
Of mad unmuzzl'd lions;
As Queensberry "buff and blue"[6] unfurl'd,
And Westerha'[7] and Hopeton[8] hurl'd
To every Whig defiance.

But cautious Queensberry left the war,
Th' unmanner'd dust might soil his star;
Besides he hated bleeding:
But left behind him heroes bright,
Heroes in Cæsarean fight,
Or Ciceronian pleading.

O! for a throat like huge Mons-meg,[9]
To muster o'er each ardent Whig
Beneath Drumlanrig's banners;
Heroes and heroines commix,
All in the field of politics,
To win immortal honours.

[1] This is the third ballad which Burns wrote in connection with this election, the other two being the "Five Carlins" and the "Election Ballad for Westerha'." For further particulars in regard to the parties concerned in the contest see note p. 176.

[2] The fourth Duke of Queensberry, of infamous memory, well known as "Old Q." The party zeal which made him, to secure the election of a candidate of his own colours, shake hands with "wabster loons," and kiss "barefit carlins," is thus referred to with good-humoured raillery in a letter dated 20th December, 1789, from Burns to Provost Maxwell of Lochmaben:—"If at any time you expect a field-day in your town—a day when dukes, earls, and knights, pay their court to weavers, tailors, and cobblers—I should like to know of it two or three days beforehand. It is not that I care three skips of a cur-dog for the politics, but I should like to see such an exhibition of human nature."

[3] Of fiddles, wh-res, and hunters.—Afton MS.

[4] Buying.—MS.

[5] Bunters (that is, worthless women).—Ibid.

[6] The Fox or Whig livery.

[7] Sir James Johnstone, the Tory candidate.

[8] The Earl of Hopetoun.

[9] The famous monster gun at Edinburgh Castle, said to be among the oldest in Europe; now a mere show-piece. Its throat has a diameter of 20 inches.

M'Murdo[1] and his lovely spouse,
(Th' enamour'd laurels kiss her brows!)
Led on the Loves and Graces:
She won each gaping burgess' heart,
While he, all-conquering,[2] play'd his part
Among their wives and lasses.

Craigdarroch[3] led a light-arm'd corps:
Tropes, metaphors, and figures pour,
Like Hecla streaming thunder:
Glenriddell,[4] skill'd in rusty coins,
Blew up each Tory's dark designs,
And bar'd the treason under.

In either wing two champions fought,
Redoubted Staig,[5] who set at nought
The wildest savage Tory:
And Welsh,[6] who ne'er yet flinch'd his ground,
High-wav'd his magnum-bonum round
With Cyclopean fury.

Miller[7] brought up th' artillery ranks,
The many-pounders of the Banks,
Resistless desolation!
While Maxwelton,[8] that baron bold,
'Mid Lawson's[9] port entrench'd his hold,
And threaten'd worse damnation.

To these, what Tory hosts oppos'd;
With these, what Tory warriors clos'd,
Surpasses my descriving: describing
Squadrons extended long and large,
With furious speed rush'd to the charge,
Like raging devils driving.

Wha verse can sing, what prose narrate,
The butcher deeds of bloody fate
Amid this mighty tulzie! tussle
Grim Horror grinn'd—pale Terror roar'd
As Murther at his thrapple shor'd, threatened his windpipe
And Hell mix'd in the brulzie! embroilment

[1] The chamberlain of the Duke of Queensberry at Drumlanrig, and a friend of the poet. See a previous note.

[2] Sub rosa.—MS.

[3] Ferguson of Craigdarroch, champion of "The Whistle."

[4] Captain Riddell of Glenriddell, another friend of the poet. He was something of a numismatist, as is also hinted in "The Whistle."

[5] Provost Staig of Dumfries. A song and an epigram on this gentleman's daughter Jessie will be found further on.

[6] Sheriff Welsh of Dumfriesshire.

[7] Patrick Miller of Dalswinton, father of the Whig candidate, and the poet's own landlord, who had been a banker.

[8] Sir Robert Lawrie of Maxwelton, M.P.

[9] Lawson, a wine merchant in Dumfries.

As Highland craigs by thunder cleft, crags
When lightnings fire the stormy lift,
Hurl down wi' crashing rattle:
As flames among a hundred woods;
As headlong foam a hundred floods;
Such is the rage of battle!

The stubborn Tories dare to die;
As soon the rooted oaks would fly
Before th' approaching fellers:
The Whigs came on like Ocean's roar,
When all his wintry billows pour
Against the Buchan Bullers.[1]

Lo, from the shades of Death's deep night,
Departed Whigs enjoy the fight,
And think on former daring:
The muffled murderer[2] of Charles
The Magna Charta flag unfurls,
All deadly gules its bearing

Nor wanting ghosts of Tory fame,
Bold Scrimgeour[3] follows gallant Graham,[4]
Auld Covenanters shiver.
(Forgive, forgive, much wrong'd Montrose!
While death and hell engulph thy foes,
Thou liv'st on high for ever!)

Still o'er the field the combat burns,
The Tories, Whigs, give way by turns;
But Fate the word has spoken;
For woman's wit and strength o' man,
Alas! can do but what they can—
The Tory ranks are broken!

O that my een were flowing burns! eyes brooks
My voice a lioness that mourns
Her darling cubs' undoing!
That I might greet, that I might cry, weep
While Tories fall, while Tories fly,
And furious Whigs pursuing!

What Whig but wails the good Sir James;
Dear to his country by the names
Friend, patron, benefactor!

[1] The "Bullers of Buchan" is an appellation given to some remarkable rock scenery on the Aberdeenshire coast, near Peterhead—especially to a rocky cauldron having an opening below to the sea, which, when raging in it, gives it the appearance of a huge boiling pot, and hence the name. The poet visited the Bullers when on his Highland tour and coming south.

[2] The executioner of Charles I. was masked.

[3] John Scrimgeour, Earl of Dundee, who fought for Charles II. at Worcester and in Scotland.

[4] The great Marquis of Montrose.

"Ye hills, near neibours o' the starns."
—ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON.

"Ye hills, near neibours o' the starns."

Not Pulteney's wealth can Pulteney save!
And Hopeton falls, the generous brave!
And Stewart,[1] bold as Hector.

Thou, Pitt, shalt rue this overthrow;
And Thurlow growl a curse of woe:
And Melville melt in wailing!
Now Fox and Sheridan rejoice!
And Burke shall sing, "O Prince, arise!
Thy power is all-prevailing."

For your poor friend, the Bard, afar
He only hears and sees the war,
A cool spectator purely;
So, when the storm the forests rends,
The robin in the hedge descends,
And sober chirps securely.

Now, for my friends' and brethren's sakes,
And for my dear-lov'd Land o' Cakes,
I pray with holy fire:
Lord, send a rough-shod troop o' Hell,
O'er a' wad Scotland buy or sell, all (whc) would
To grind them in the mire![2]

ELEGY ON CAPTAIN MATTHEW HENDERSON,[3]

A GENTLEMAN WHO HELD THE PATENT FOR HIS HONOURS IMMEDIATELY FROM ALMIGHTY GOD.

"You knew Matthew Henderson. At the time of his death I composed an elegiac stanza or two, as he was a man I much regarded; but something came in my way, so that the design of an elegy to his memory I gave up. Meeting with the fragment the other day among some old waste papers, I tried to finish the piece, and have this moment put the last hand to it."—BURNS TO R. CLEGHORN, 23d July, 1790.

Should the poor be flattered?—SHAKSPEARE.

But now his radiant course is run,
For Matthew's course was bright;
His soul was like the glorious sun,
A matchless, heav'nly light!

O Death! thou tyrant fell and bloody!
The meikle devil wi' a woodie gallows-rope
Haurl thee hame to his black smiddie, drag smithy
O'er hurcheon hides, hedgehog

[1] Stewart of Hillside.—R. B.

[2] There are several manuscripts of this piece preserved, and editions differ as to the fulness with which they are reproduced. Between stanzas one and three of our text some editors insert four, and others six additional stanzas. The last two of these six are given in this edition separately—"Stanzas on the Duke of Queensberry"—"How shall I sing Drumlanrig's Grace," &c. The verses suppressed by the poet when he retouched the epistle as a finished production should scarcely be reproduced by editors, even as curiosities. His own deliberate judgment should be held sacred. Here, as in the "Vision," the insertion of the verses rejected by the writer adds neither strength nor completeness.

[3] Very little seems to be known regarding Captain

And like stock-fish come o'er his studdie — stithy (anvil)
Wi' thy auld sides!

He's gane, he's gane! he's frae us torn, — from
The ae best fellow e'er was born! — one
Thee, Matthew, Nature's sel' shall mourn
By wood and wild,
Where, haply, Pity strays forlorn,
Frae man exil'd.

Ye hills, near neibours o' the starns, — stars
That proudly cock your cresting cairns!
Ye cliffs, the haunts of sailing earns, — eagles
Where echo slumbers!
Come join, ye nature's sturdiest bairns,
My wailing numbers!

Mourn, ilka grove the cushat kens! — every
Ye haz'lly shaws and briery dens! — woods
Ye burnies, wimplin' down your glens, — streamlets
Wi' toddlin' din,
Or foaming strang, wi' hasty stens, — strong leaps
Frae linn to linn. — from precipice

Mourn, little harebells o'er the lea;
Ye stately foxgloves, fair to see;
Ye woodbines, hanging bonnilie
In scented bow'rs;
Ye roses on your thorny tree,
The first o' flow'rs.

At dawn, when ev'ry grassy blade
Droops with a diamond at his head,
At ev'n, when beans their fragrance shed,
I' th' rustling gale,
Ye maukins, whiddin' thro' the glade, — hares, skipping
Come join my wail.

Henderson, who forms the subject of this fine elegy. He is said to have been a gentleman of highly agreeable manners and correct principles, who resided in Edinburgh while Burns was there, dined regularly at Fortune's Tavern, and was a member of the Capillaire Club, much frequented by the gay and witty. "With his family," said Sir Thomas Wallace, who was inquired of regarding him, "I was not acquainted: but he was a gentleman of true principles and probity, and for abilities, goodness of heart, gentleness of nature, sprightly wit, and sparkling humour, would have been an honour to any family in the land." A notice of Matthew Henderson's death will be found in the *Scots Magazine* for November, 1788, in the brief form:—"21, At Edinburgh, Matthew Henderson, Esq." He was buried in Greyfriars' Churchyard, and in the Burial Register he is described as Captain Matthew Henderson of Tunnochside or Tannochside (?). There is a small estate called Tannochside near Bellshill, Lanarkshire. The elegy and its subject are mentioned by Burns in letters to Mr. M'Murdo, 2d Aug. 1790, Mr. Graham, 4th Sept. 1790, and Dr. Moore, 27th Feb. 1791. In writing to Mr. Graham the poet says: "Poor Matthew! I can forgive Poverty for hiding virtue and piety"; and he seems to have understood that his deceased friend suffered from straitened circumstances.——Professor Wilson says of this poem, that it "is a wonderfully fine flight of imagination, but it wants, we think, the deep feeling of the 'Lament' [for Glencairn]. . . . We know not where to look, in the whole range of poetry, for an Invocation to the great and fair objects of the external world, so rich and various in imagery, and throughout so sustained."

Mourn, ye wee songsters o' the wood;
Ye grouse that crap the heather bud; nibble
Ye curlews calling thro' a clud; cloud
Ye whistling plover;
And mourn, ye whirring paitrick brood; partridge
He's gane for ever!

Mourn, sooty coots, and speckled teals;
Ye fisher herons, watching eels;
Ye duck and drake, wi' airy wheels
Circling the lake;
Ye bitterns, till the quagmire reels,
Rair for his sake. boom

Mourn, clam'ring craiks at close o' day,
'Mang fields o' flow'ring clover gay;
And when ye wing your annual way
Frae our cauld shore,
Tell thae far warlds, wha lies in clay, those
Wham we deplore.

Ye houlets, frae your ivy bow'r, owls
In some auld tree, or eldritch tow'r, awe-inspiring
What time the moon, wi' silent glow'r, stare
Sets up her horn,
Wail thro' the dreary midnight hour
Till waukrife morn! wakeful

O rivers, forests, hills, and plains!
Oft have ye heard my canty strains: cheerful
But now, what else for me remains
But tales of woe;
And frae my een the drapping rains eyes
Maun ever flow. must

Mourn, spring, thou darling of the year!
Ilk cowslip cup shall kep a tear: each catch
Thou, simmer, while each corny spear
Shoots up its head,
Thy gay, green, flow'ry tresses shear,
For him that's dead!

Thou, autumn, wi' thy yellow hair,
In grief thy sallow mantle tear!
Thou, winter, hurling thro' the air
The roaring blast,
Wide o'er the naked world declare
The worth we've lost!

Mourn him, thou Sun, great source of light!
Mourn, Empress of the silent night!

And you, ye twinkling starnies, bright, — little stars
My Matthew mourn!
For thro' your orbs he's ta'en his flight,
Ne'er to return.

O Henderson! the man! the brother!
And art thou gone, and gone for ever?
And hast thou crost that unknown river,
Life's dreary bound?
Like thee, where shall I find another,
The world round!

Go to your sculptur'd tombs, ye Great,
In a' the tinsel trash o' state!
But by thy honest turf I'll wait,
Thou man of worth!
And weep the ae best fellow's fate — one
E'er lay in earth.

THE EPITAPH.[1]

Stop, passenger! my story's brief;
And truth I shall relate, man;
I tell nae common tale o' grief, — no
For Matthew was a great man.

If thou uncommon merit hast,
Yet spurn'd at fortune's door, man;
A look of pity hither cast,
For Matthew was a poor man.

If thou a noble sodger art,
That passest by this grave, man,
There moulders here a gallant heart;
For Matthew was a brave man.

If thou on men, their works and ways,
Canst throw uncommon light, man;
Here lies wha weel had won thy praise, — who well
For Matthew was a bright man.

If thou at friendship's sacred ca' — call
Wad life itself resign, man; — would
Thy sympathetic tear maun fa', — must fall
For Matthew was a kind man!

[1] This epitaph is very inferior to the foregoing "Elegy," and must strike most readers as being in a strain (almost burlesque) that is quite incongruous with it.

If thou art staunch without a stain,
Like the unchanging blue, man;
This was a kinsman o' thy ain, own
For Matthew was a true man.

If thou hast wit, and fun, and fire,
And ne'er guid wine did fear, man;
This was thy billie, dam, and sire, brother
For Matthew was a queer man.

If ony whiggish whingin' sot, whining
To blame poor Matthew dare, man;
May dool and sorrow be his lot, misery
For Matthew was a rare man.

LINES

WRITTEN IN A WRAPPER, ENCLOSING A LETTER TO CAPTAIN GROSE.[1]

TUNE—"*Sir John Malcolm.*"

Ken ye ought o' Captain Grose?
Igo, and ago,
If he's amang his friends or foes
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he South, or is he North?
Igo, and ago,
Or drownèd in the river Forth?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he slain by Highland bodies?
Igo, and ago.
And eaten like a wether-haggis?
Iram, coram, dago.

Is he to Abram's bosom gane?
Igo, and ago,
Or haudin Sarah by the wame?
Iram, coram, dago.

[1] This was written in the autumn of 1790. Burns, not knowing Grose's address at the time, inclosed a letter to him under cover to Mr. Cardonnel, a well-known antiquary, in order that *he* might forward it to his "fat friend." What was written in the wrapper was done extemporaneously. Mr. Cardonnel published a quarto volume on ancient Scottish coins, which accounts for the allusion in the last verse. Burns's lines are a parody of an old humorous ditty beginning:—

Ken ye ought o' Sir John Malcolm?
Igo, and ago,
If he's a wise man, I mistak him!
Iram, coram, dago.

The letter so inclosed was one informing Grose that Professor Dugald Stewart wished to be introduced to him, and letting him know that Catrine, the professor's summer residence, was within a mile of Sorn Castle, which was included in Captain Grose's scheme of visiting.

Where'er he be, the Lord be near him!
Igo, and ago,
As for the deil, he daur na steer him! dare not disturb
Iram, coram, dago.

But please transmit th' enclosèd letter,
Igo, and ago,
Which will oblige your humble debtor.
Iram, coram, dago.

So may ye hae auld stanes in store,
Igo, and ago,
The very stanes that Adam bore!
Iram, coram, dago.

So may ye get in glad possession,
Igo, and ago,
The coins o' Satan's coronation!
Iram, coram, dago.

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